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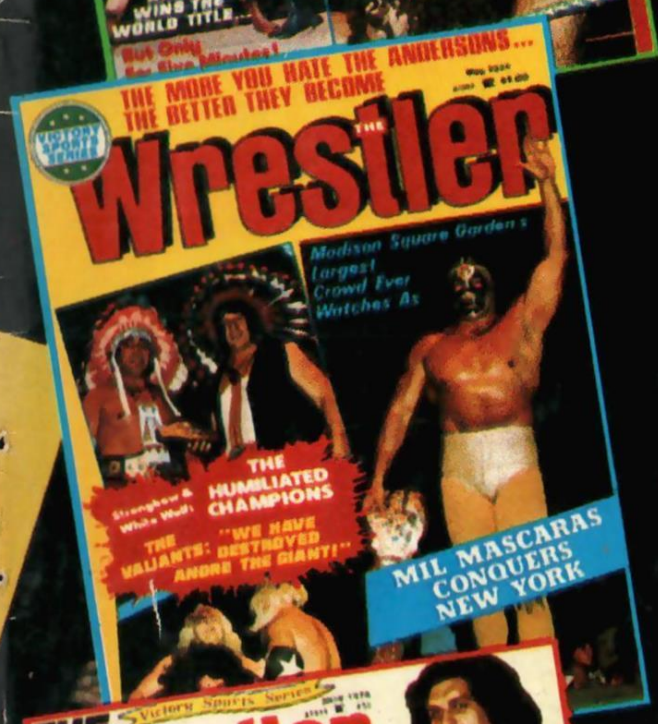
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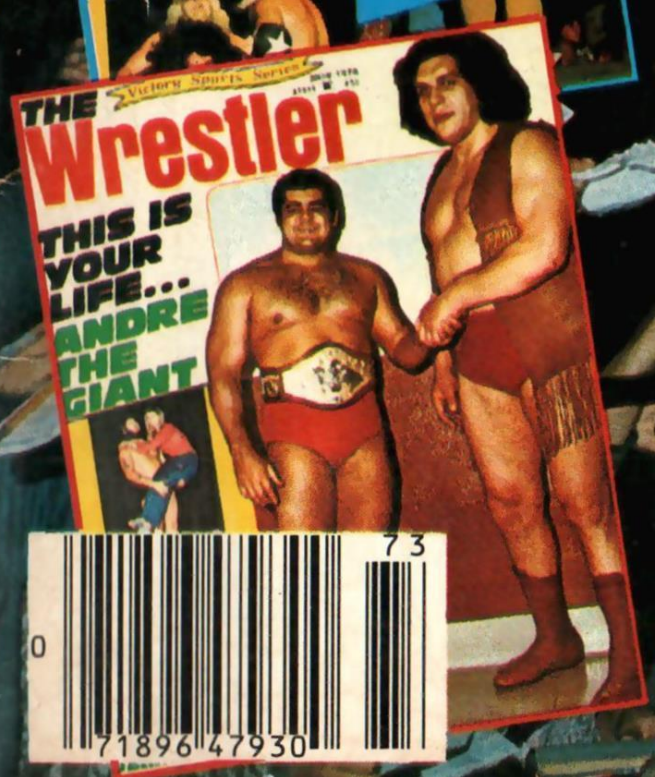

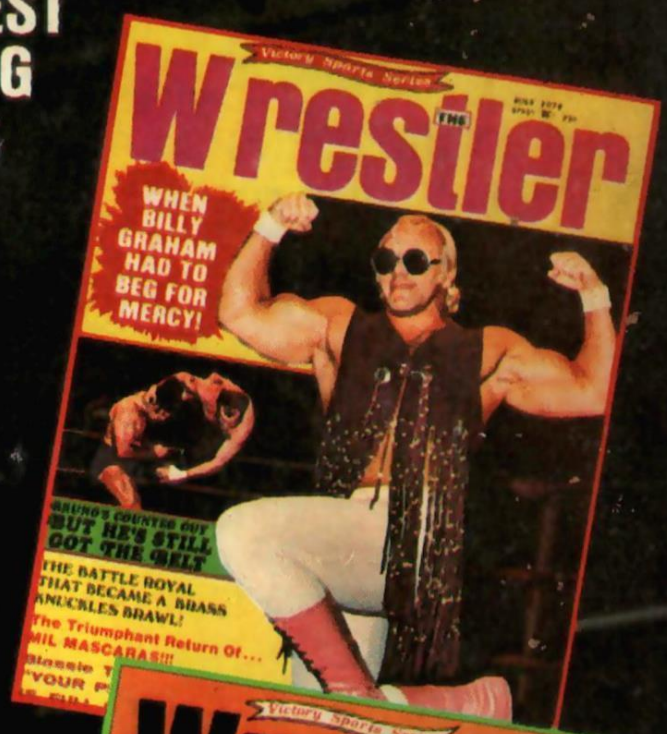
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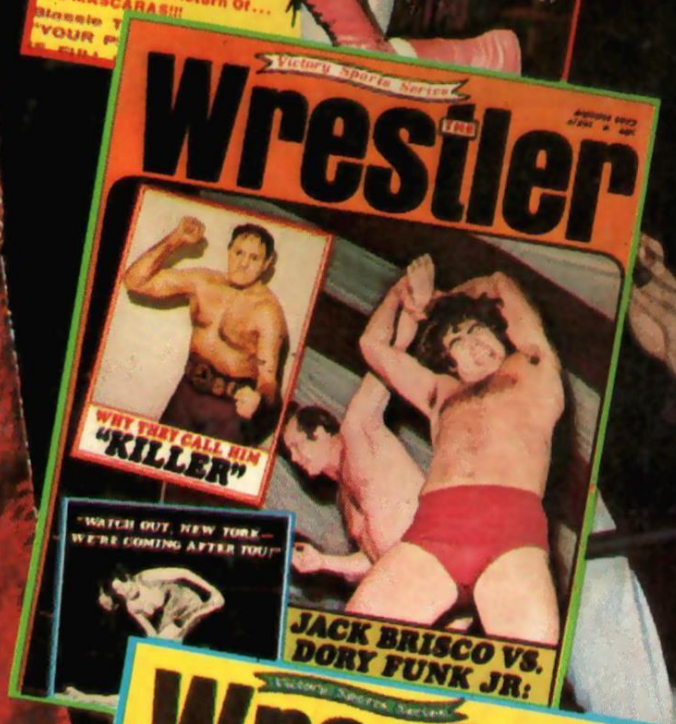
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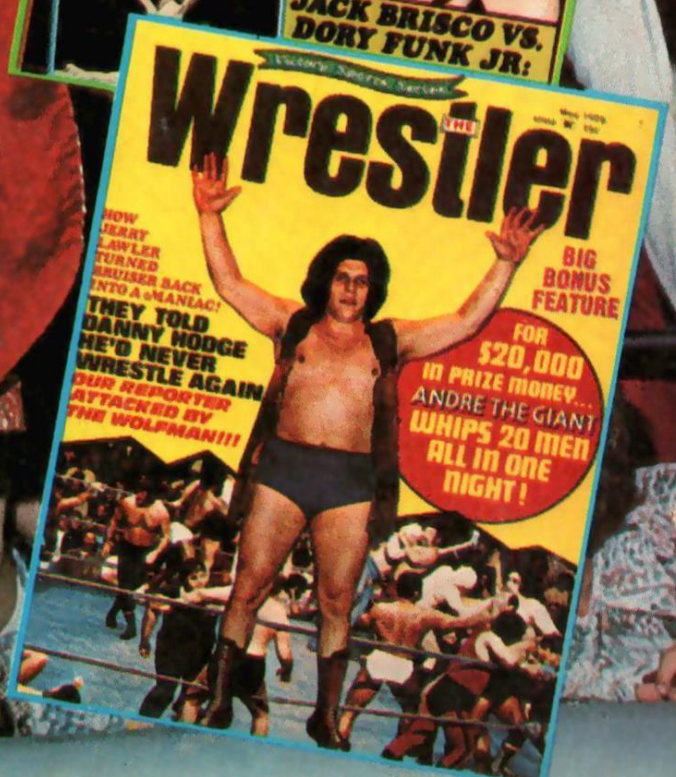
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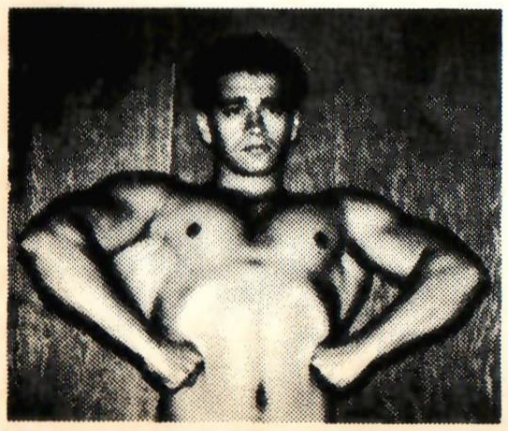

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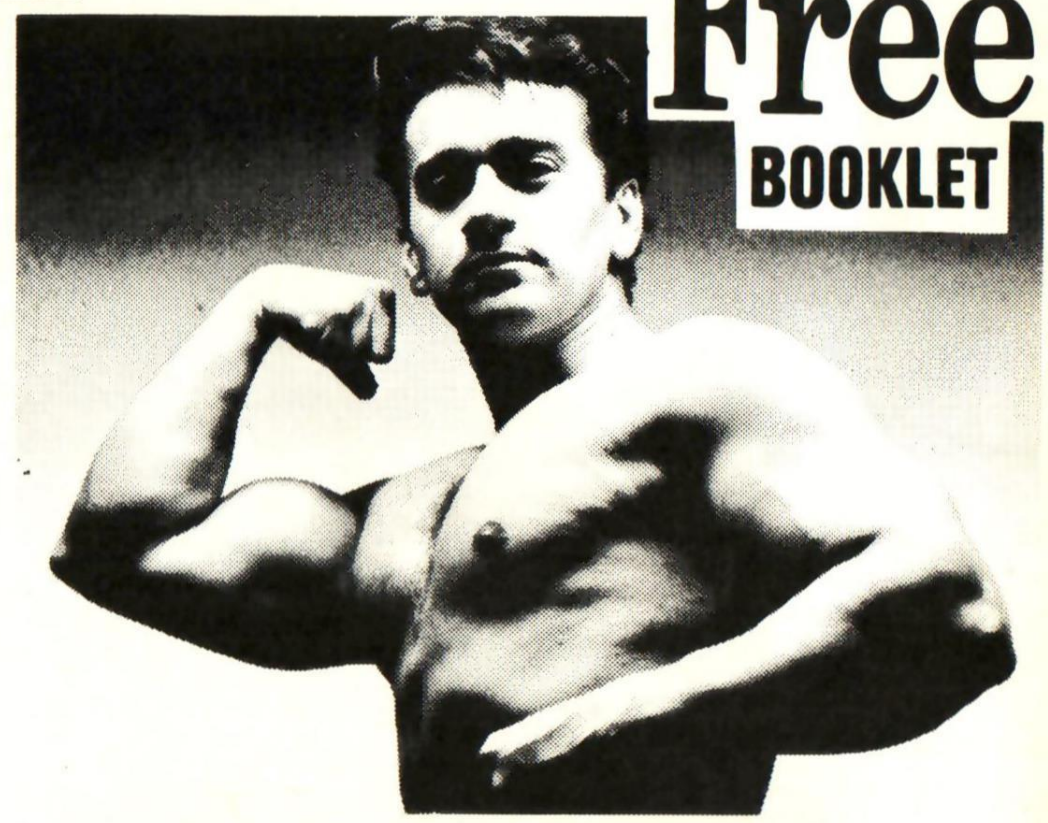

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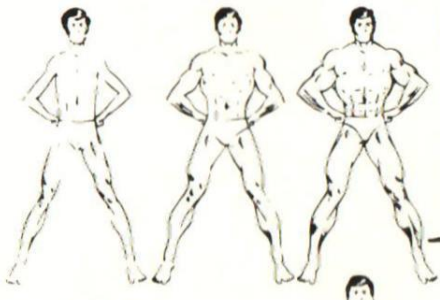

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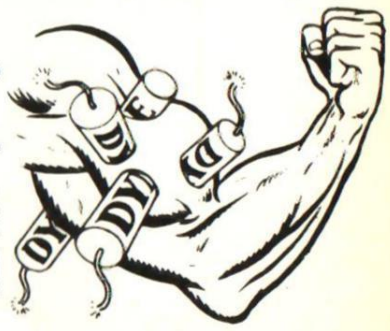

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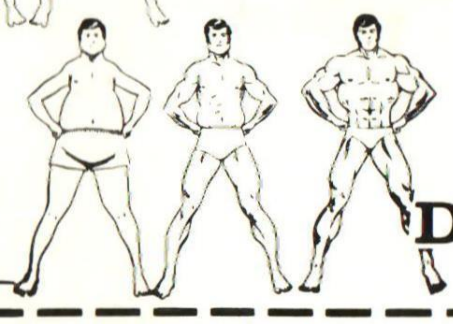

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THE BEST OF THE Wrestler THE

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INTRODUCTION

THE BEST OF THE WRESTLER

DUE TO THE demand of wrestling fans all over the world, we once again bring you BEST OF THE WRESTLER. Here is another collection of our most discussed, most praised, and most honored articles.

This issue leads off with "Even Japan is Wild About Billy Robinson." Many fans will delight in remembering his great tour of that island country, winning new supporters and proving his ability. Not only does one get a special glimpse of Robinson, but also we get a new understanding of Japanese wrestling. It appeared in January 1975.

When Jack Brisco came under heavy criticism for his tactics, we rushed to print "Don't Believe Those Nasty Stories About Jack Brisco." As observers of the wrestling scene, we knew the man was among the best scientific grapplers in his field. The story is reprinted because of its importance as a document to the man's courage. It's from the issue published in February 1975.

A few years back, fans rejoiced in "The Triumphant Return of Mil Mascaras." The man, who had been away from the mat wars, returned to California and the cheers of those who love him. This welcome was recorded in THE WRESTLER/July 1974.

Those lucky enough to have purchased the August 1974 issue will be delighted to once again read "I'll Smash Your Face In!" Those who read it for the first time will understand why it is one of our most famous articles.

Normally a poised scientific wrestler, "When Ricky Romero Sees Red . . . Watch Out!" Those who thought young Ricky was incapable of brawling were taught a lesson they'll never forget. To remind themselves, many professional grapplers have kept their copy of THE WRESTLER/April 1974, when this article first appeared.

One of the most startling claims ever was "Lou Albano and The Valiants: 'We Challenge Ali, Frazier and Foreman!'" When the trio threw down the gauntlet in April 1975, the three boxers failed to accept the challenge. It remains one of the most revealing articles about these three wrestlers ever printed.

In THE WRESTLER/July 1974, fans were warned "You Creeps Don't Deserve To See My Face." Wait until you read about the masked grappler who made this statement!

"The $10,000 Jim Dillon Can't Give Away" was a bounty. This article appeared in March 1975 and Dillon still has his money. When you read who the wrestlers had to conquer for the prize we're sure you'll understand why Dillon can count on keeping his fortune.

"A 'Different' View of Raymond Rougeau" thrilled female fans in May 1975. Now thousands more women can have the same thrill.

The first story ever about Superstar Billy Graham appeared in THE WRESTLER/January 1971. This historic article was entitled, "This Billy Graham Preaches Violence." Even then, Superstar knew what would happen six years later.

After he lost the NWA title for the first time, we printed "Did They Write Off Harley Race Too Soon?" That article appeared in July 1975. Less than two years later, Race regained the title.

"For $20,000 In Prize Money . . . Andre the Giant Whips 20 Men All In One Night!" This accout of Andre's remarkable feat first appeared in May 1975.

For those of you interested in the roots of the feud between Ray Stevens and Nick Bockwinkle, read "The Real Reason Behind the Downfall of Bockwinkle and Stevens." The two men were still friendly when this prophetic article appeared in THE WRESTLER/December 1974. But things sure turned around quickly.

One of the most shocking events in wrestling history was "Sheik Burns Referee!" The horrible occurrence was first reported in January 1975. Here we reprint the article to remind people how vicious Sheik can be.

This cornucopia of wrestling is yours in THE BEST OF THE WRESTLER. We know you'll enjoy this issue as much as the previous ones, already valuable collector's items. □

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EVEN JAPAN'S WILD ABOUT BILLY ROBINSON

SINKING BACK INTO his airplane seat, Billy Robinson closed his eyes and savored the memories of his just completed tour of Japan.

A smile spread over Billy's face as he recalled the grand reception Japanese fans gave him wherever he traveled. He unconsciously patted his stomach as he remembered his many excellent Japanese meals. And Billy's chest swelled with pride knowing he was the new I.W.A. champion. Only the fact his tour had come to an end ruined his bliss.

When they had first told Billy he had matches scheduled in Japan, he was elated. The Japanese fans have long admired Billy's talents and he has long enjoyed wrestling before them. When he stepped off the 747 in the Tokyo airport, the press asked him how he felt to be back.

"Going to Japan," Billy told them, "is one of the great benefits of being a professional wrestler. On my other tours I've experienced some of the greatest thrills of my life, professionally and personally. This time there will be a special reason for my tour. Before I leave your beautiful country, I hope to be the new I.W.A. champion. I look forward to exciting matches and sightseeing. And, as always, it's a great pleasure being back in Japan!"

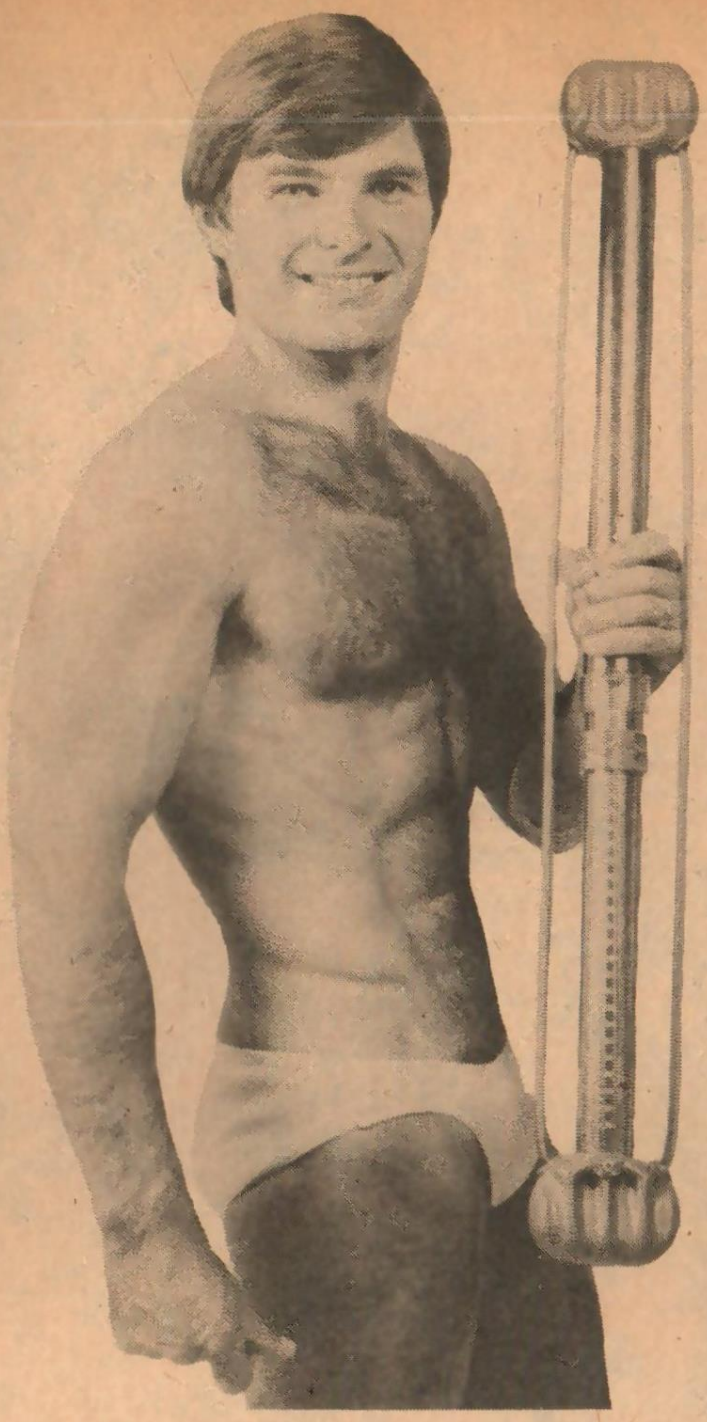
After his first few matches, Billy became confident he would take the title from its current holder, Crusher Kimura.

"Call it fate, call it luck," Billy told friends, "but everything seems to be breaking for me this trip. I can do nothing wrong. When you've been getting the breaks like I have, it's got to be an omen of great things to come.

"No matter where I wrestle the arenas are packed and the fans cheer my every move. I'm winning with a regularity and ease which is almost embarassing! I feel great,

(Continued on page 46)

Billy Robinson had a perfect stay in Japan—perfect because he became I.W.A. champion!



Bob Breton, fitness expert, says:

If you're into fitness Bullworker® puts it all together

Most men will not stick with any fitness program long enough for it to do them any good, unless the training is fast, easy and shows results right away. Bullworker puts it all together:

—it's fast: each exercise takes only 7 seconds and the complete "get back in shape" workout can be done in less than 5 minutes.

—it's easy: any man between 15 and 65 in good general health can perform the training without getting tired.

—you see your results from the very first day on the built-in powermeter. After a couple of weeks of regular training most men can expect to measure an extra inch or two of muscle on their shoulders, chest and biceps—and an inch or two less flab around the middle.

And that's just the start: there are specialized exercises for building-up or trimming down any part of your body, you want to: back, shoulders, chest, biceps, forearms and wrists, abdominal muscles, buttocks, thighs and calves...plus important circulatory training.

What's more, since Bullworker training is progressive, you perform better each time. Yet the training always seems easy because your strength increases by about 1% with every workout. That's an increase of up to 50% in three months and I've seen many men go on to double and even triple their strength.

For my money, Bullworker is the most advanced fitness trainer on the market today. I use it myself and recommend it to every man who wants to get back in shape.

For free details about Bullworker Fitness Training, recommended by fitness experts, champion athletes and over two million enthusiastic users the world around, mail coupon for FREE BOOKLET today. No obligation; no salesman will visit.

BULLWORKER SERVICE, 201 Lincoln Blvd., Middlesex, N.J. 08846 262

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24 pages of action photos in full color show you how to build a powerful body in just five minutes a day

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201 Lincoln Blvd., Middlesex, N.J. 08846

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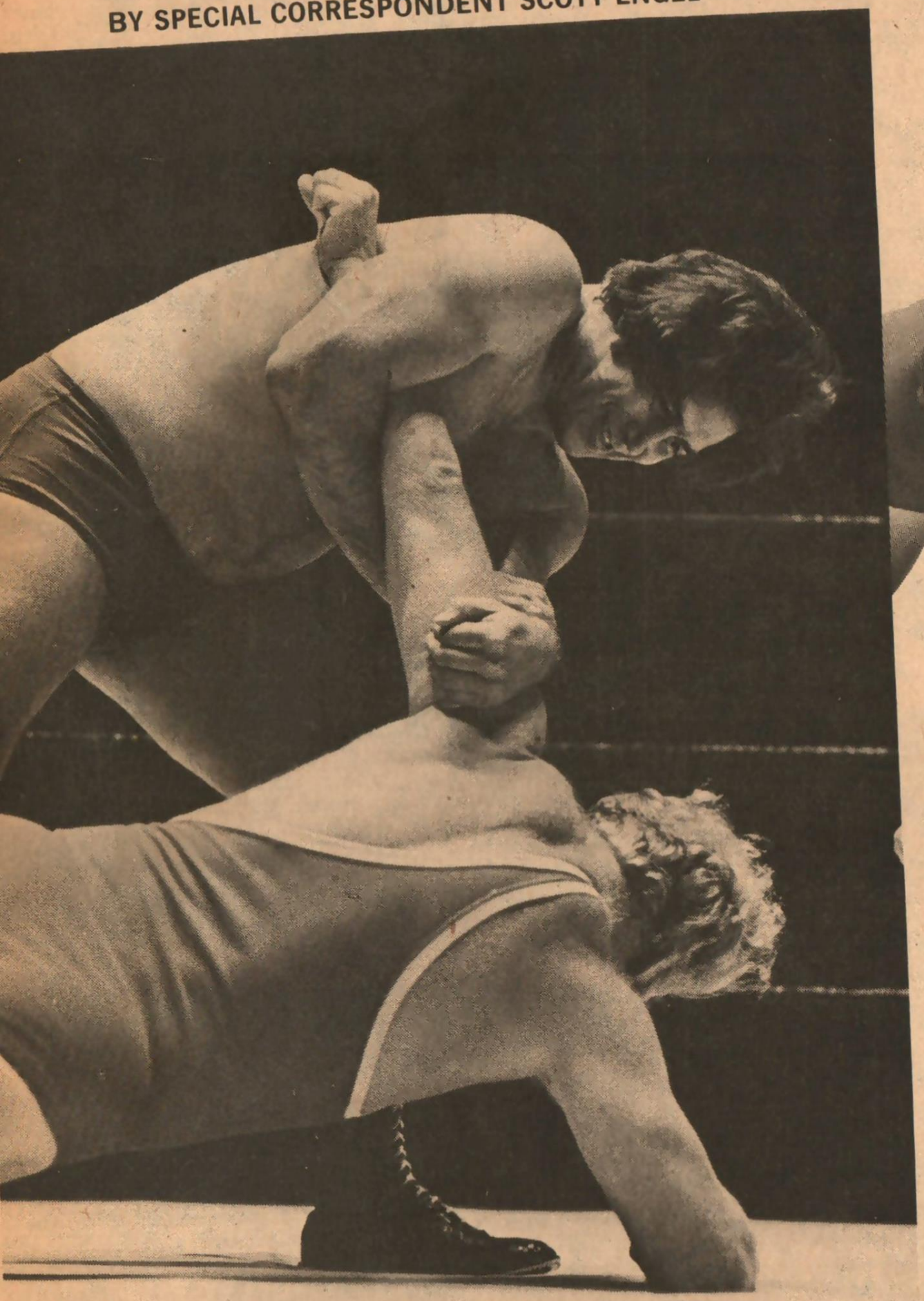
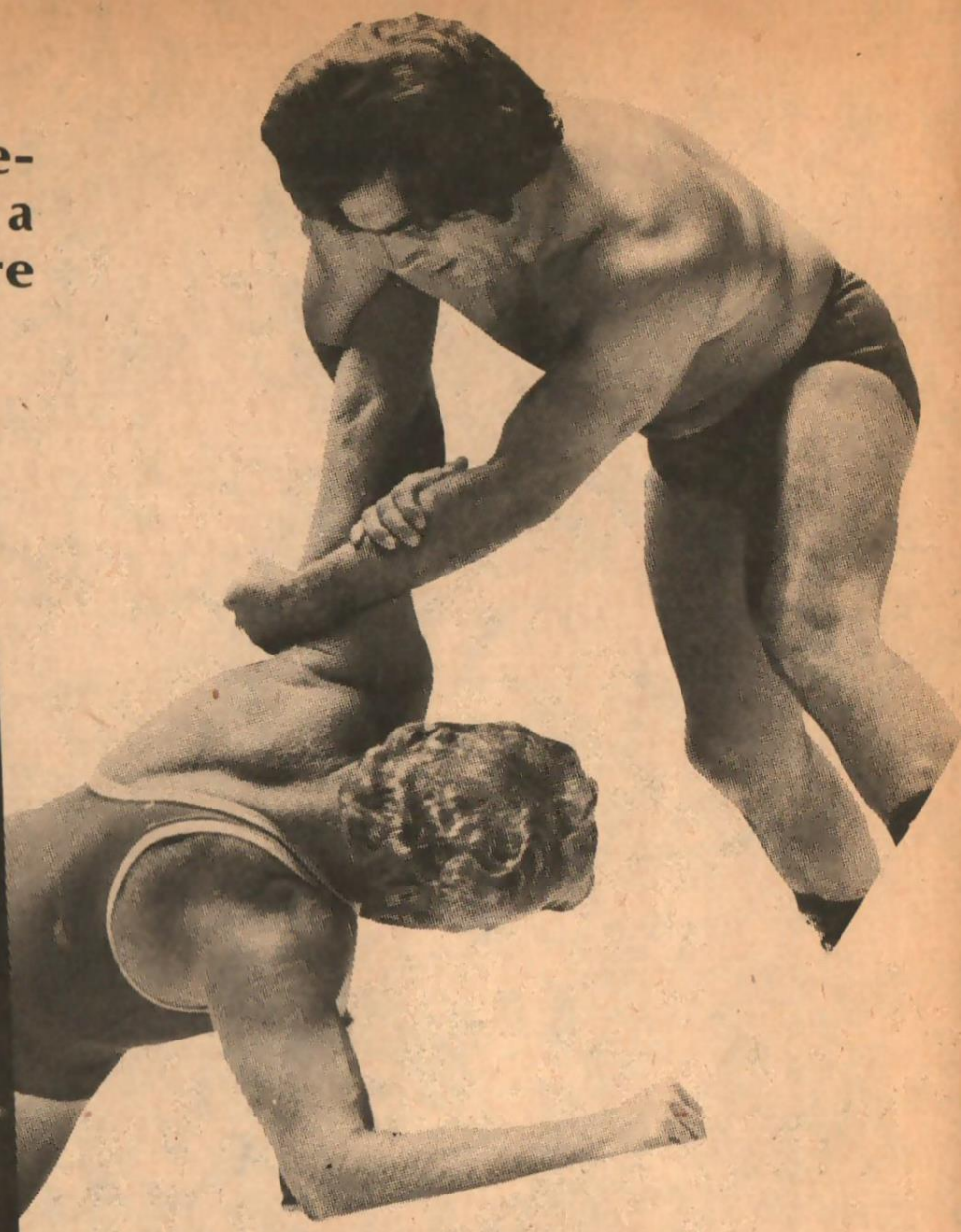
Canada: Home delivery duty paid. Ask for FREE booklet.

Because of all the reports this magazine has received about Jack Brisco "turning dirty," we sent a reporter to one of Jack's matches in Toronto. Here is what he found

BY SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT SCOTT ENGEL





No matter how he twists (left) and turns (above), Lyons can't escape Jack Brisco's armbar.

DON'T BELIEVE THOSE reports you've been hearing about Jack Brisco turning dirty. They're just not true. I know. I saw an example of how these rumors get started myself.

Since this magazine has been flooded with reports about Brisco turning into a "bad guy," the editor dispatched me to Toronto, where the N.W.A. heavyweight champion had an upcoming title match against popular Billy "Red" Lyons. If these rumors were true, this match figured to be a good opportunity to see that truth in action.

As is often the case, the fans were behind the local hero, in this case Lyons. While Brisco wasn't booed, he didn't get the reception a popular champion figures to get.

During the match, however, fans

(Continued on page 48)

DON'T BELIEVE THOSE NASTY STORIES ABOUT JACK BRISCO

MONEY...

First Come, First Served.

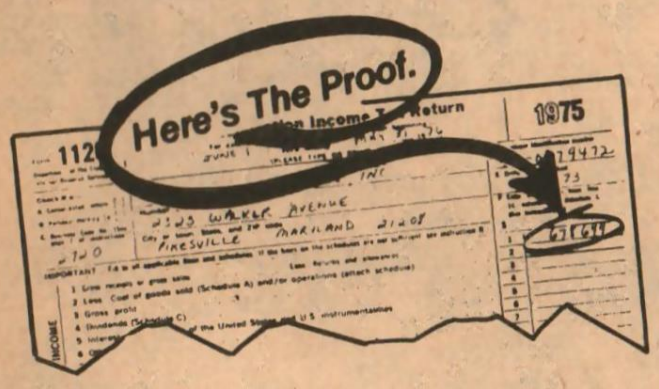
"This is the system, the *whole* system and the *only* system I used to walk home with 500,000 clams. I GUARANTEE it will make you a winner in 30 days." *MIKE WARREN*

From now on, if you lose your shirt on the ponies, you have no one but yourself to blame.

Because I—Mike Warren—am going to show you how to win back your shirt, your bank balance and your zest for life. I'm going to lead you back to GREEN PASTURES and the GOOD LIFE you've always hankered for—the big house, the summer home, the swimming pool, the three cars, the six week vacations—the whole bit.

I'm going to teach you seven little secrets.

Seven little secrets that earned me well over $500,000 last year. $300,000 the year before. $150,000 the year before that. And $75,000 the very first year I perfected my system.



Here's the proof: a photostat of Mike Warren's IRS return for Calendar 1975.

Nobody—but I mean NOBODY—can duplicate my record for picking winners over the past four years.

Which may sound like bragging.

But the day you walk away from a parimutuel window with winnings of $10, $20 and even $50 on a modest $2 wager—as a result of using my system—you'll think I'm the best friend you ever had. And as your winnings pile up—and you really start to turn your life around . . . and as you realize *you have now become a consistent winner at the track*—you're going to start blowing me long distance kisses or sending me love notes like the ones I get every day:

Dear Mr. Warren:
You DID IT! You solved the problem I've been working on for years! I have never run across so accurate or refined a system of playing the horses in all my life. I have thrown away all the charts, plastic slides, and "professional systems" in my library. I just can't get over how your simple system put me onto winner after winner! TEN BUCKS?!!!! Hell, you should charge three hundred times that for what you're disclosing!
Sincerely,
D.R.S., San Diego, CA 92117

Dear Mike,
. . . What a payoff. $15.20 for ELSIE to win and $246.80 for the exacta—$2,620 for a $20 bet.
Mike, thank you. You are free to use this letter and I will have it notarized.
Sincerely,
BOB COOKE, 3 West 51 St.
New York, N.Y. 10019

Sworn to me this
4th day of February 1976
NOTARY PUBLIC
Dear Mike,
Your method is fool proof. I have won 70% of the races I have received from you since Saturday.
Again, thank you.
Randall W., Brooklyn, N.Y.

Convinced? Okay, but already I can hear you asking: "WHY IS THIS GUY GIVING IT AWAY?"

The answer is twofold and very simple.

One, I'll make a bundle on the book I'm selling you.

Two, very few bettors have the character to stick to any system, let alone my "SYSTEM OF THE CENTURY".

So in a way, I'm challenging you as a bettor and as a man. Because if you think of it, there isn't a reason in the world why a serious bettor shouldn't be a consistent winner—maybe not to the tune of 500,000 a year—but still, he ought to be in the black. Even the occasional horseplayer shouldn't have to take a drubbing every time he visits the track.

Yet most bettors are consistent losers.

Why? You'd better ask the shrinks. They claim the habitual loser secretly wants to lose. You figure it out.

All I know is, they lose and lose and lose and they never learn. It's a pity, but it has a paradoxical effect.

BECAUSE OF THE HABITUAL LOSERS, THE ODDS FAVOR THE MAN WITH A GOOD SYSTEM WHO STICKS TO IT.

In other words, it's the losers who feed the winners.

Tomorrow morning, when I get up, my biggest problem will be to figure out whether I should play golf, putter around with my Mercedes, take the wife to Acapulco, fly to Florida with my kids to see Disney World or even visit my in-laws.

I'm 33 years old. I can live this life style the rest of my days.

So when people tell me you can't beat the ponies, what can I say?

I beat them all the time. I NEVER lose. I've *proved* it.

WHAT *IS* "THE SYSTEM OF THE CENTURY"?

I could almost squeeze it in on the rest of this page. It's so simple, if you've never placed a bet before or even been to a race track, you'll *consistently* find yourself on the boards, walking away from the parimutuel window with $10's, 20's and, yes, even $50's for your $2 wager.

The System consists of seven rules—seven rules you can read and memorize in just one hour at home. One of these rules—Rule 4—is so elementary that you can go to any race track with an infield turf (grass) course and start writing your own checks tomorrow as if you'd been a track pro for 20 years.

If you're a regular horseplayer, "The System of the Century" could put you on Easy Street as a permanent resident. Let me give you a clue: how many times have you spent hours poring over a single race, doping out every detail, figuring every angle . . . only to find that the horse you picked to begin with . . . and decided against for some reason even *you* can't remember—romped home an easy winner? YOU ALMOST HAD IT, BUT YOU LOST IT. YOU SCRAPPED ONE RULE IN FAVOR OF ANOTHER. YOU HAD NO *SYSTEM*. YOU HAD NO *PRIORITIES*.

A lifetime at the track—under the wing of my father, who was a handicapper before me—listening to trainers, owners, jockeys, high rollers and handicappers—asking questions, taking notes, keeping records of wins and losses—and then putting it all together—*this was how I learned what those priorities are.*

And they're incorporated into "The System of the Century".

And now it's all yours.

$10 MAY BE ALL YOU NEED TO GET STARTED.

Here's how failsafe my system is . . . *provided you follow my seven little rules strictly and without exception.* Then you'll start cashing in on those big parimutuel tickets most people just dream about.

Now, I recognize that the world is full of skeptics—even the wise get fooled once in a while. So I make this proposition to you:

SEND ME $10.00. I WON'T CASH YOUR CHECK FOR 30 DAYS.

That $10.00 is payment in full for "The System of the Century".

Use the System at your local race track for 30 days, making sure to follow my rules as outlined therein. Bet as much as you want—and keep what you take in with my blessings! If my method fails to work in exactly the manner I've described, *you have risked nothing*—because I'll send your original check back to you *uncashed*. In fact, *date your check one month ahead*—that way nobody can touch your ten bucks while you prove for yourself whether my System is everything I say it is.

Could anything be fairer?

I've proved my System works—it's making *millions* for a handful of smart bettors.

And here I am offering it to you with a 30 day free trial money back guarantee.

You're a smart bettor. How can you walk away from odds like that?

Who is Mike Warren?

The man RACING FORUM calls "The Jack Anderson of American handicapping," and the son of a handicapper, Mike Warren gained early exposure to the world of horses and tracks, jockeys and trainers, losers and winners.

Today, as America's premier handicapper, Mike is well on his way to becoming a self made millionaire at 33—because he picks 'em with uncanny accuracy. And he does it with more than talent.

In an atmosphere crackling with excitement, Mike leads a highly specialized network of professionals, fine-tuned and coordinated to produce one single product: winners.

Mike and his team dispense this precious product to subscribers as conscientiously as a first-rate investigative reporter reveals and interprets news as quickly as it happens.

Sworn Statement . . .

This is to certify that all statements made in this ad are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. MIKE WARREN is a professional handicapper of Thoroughbred horses, and his gross income for the last twelve months was in excess of $500,000.00.

Mike Warren

CLIP AND MAIL TODAY VSG-897

Mike Warren
The Baltimore Bulletin, Inc.
Professional Building
Baltimore, MD 21208

Dear Mike,

I can't afford to pass up your offer. Please send me "The System of the Century" by return mail. I understand that if your method doesn't make big money for me as you have outlined, all I have to do is return it within 30 days and my uncashed check will be returned to me.

On that basis, here is my check for $10.00 *dated one month from now.* (If you're enclosing a money order that can't be dated ahead, you have the same money back guarantee.)

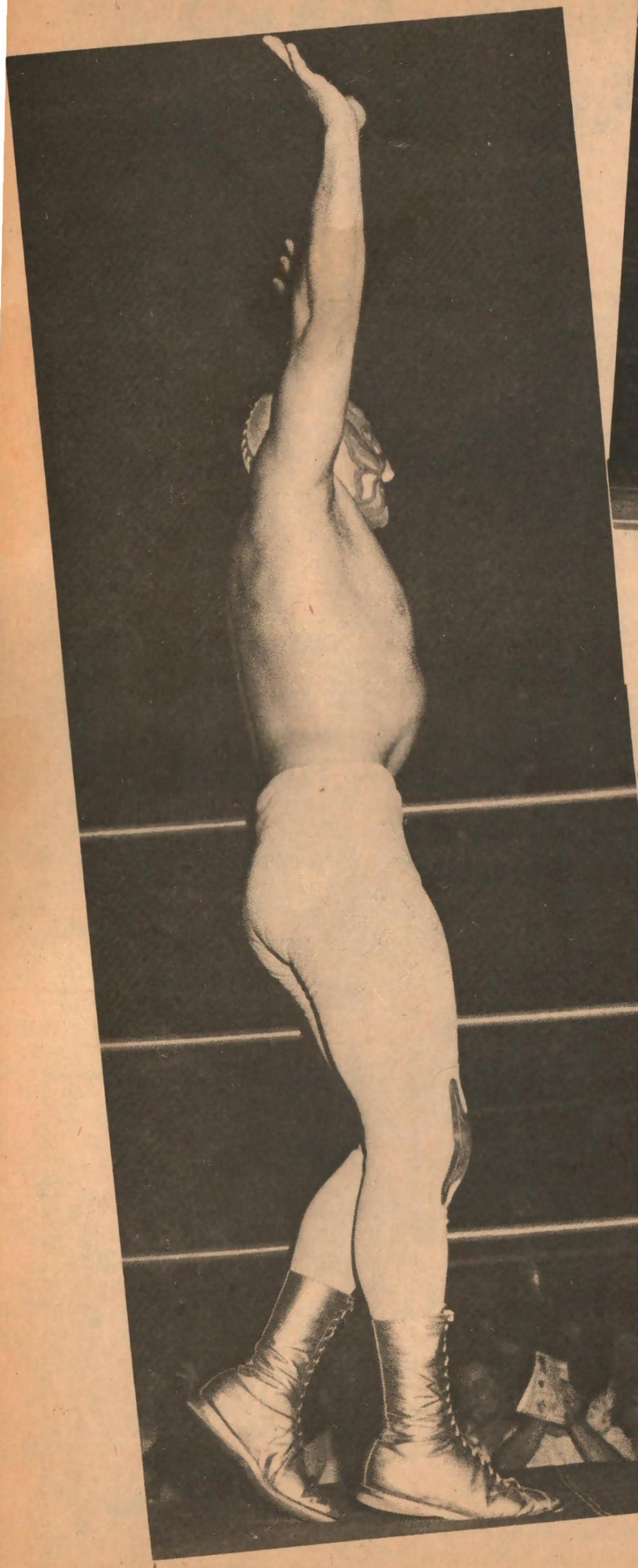
☐ For immediate shipment, first class, add 50c (in coin or stamps please.)

name_____

address_____

city_____ state____ zip_____

Please make checks payable to "The Baltimore Bulletin".



The sensational Mil Mascaras (left) happily accepts the cheers of fans before his match against Wildman Armstrong in Georgia. He whips Armstrong (above) on his way to victory.

Exclusive Photos By Bill Beach

The Trium
MIL M

Always an amazing sight to see is Mil doing his famous flying body press (right). This time it is Armstrong who gets counted out with it.

phant Return Of... ASCARAS!!!

Between making movies and wrestling in Japan, Mil Mascaras has been away from North American arenas too long. It's good to have him back

FLYING HIGH FROM a spectacular reign of victories in Japan and other countries, the sensational Mexican masked hero, who has captured the fancy of wrestling fans all over the world, is back in the United States.

Mil Mascaras has returned!

"I was quite busy," Mil told reporters and fans who came out in herds to greet him at Houston, Texas' International Airport. "The Japanese are very great wrestlers and very hospitable people. I stayed a lot longer than I anticipated."

Besides wrestling in Japan, Mil was also very busy in Mexico starring motion pictures. Mil is a national hero in Mexico and his films are unbelieveably popular.

"I enjoy making movies," Mil said. "I've done dozens of them already. It's an enjoyable line of work when I'm not wrestling."

The making of movies often keeps Mil out of wrestling in the U.S. because he has so many contract obligations with the film companies.

"Don't get me wrong," Mil said. "I love the United States. The people have been so nice to me. They always are. But I yearn to make films and go abroad to other countries. It's a great challenge for me."

Leaving the reporters still in a questioning state, Mil hopped into a taxi and headed to Houston's sports arena where he was greeted by ace promoter Paul Boesch.

"Mil," Paul said, extending his hand and greeting him with a warm handshake. "You've got your work cut out for you tonight."

Mil and his friend Jose Lothario were going to wrestle the newly re-united team of Blackjack Lanza and Blackjack Mulligan. They were in charge of the American Tag Team title.

A few hours later, after being re-united with his buddy, Lothario, Mil and Jose left their dressing room and headed to the ring amid rousing cheers.

Mil was dynamic. He amazed everyone with his sensational tactics—tactics only Mil Mascaras could handle properly.

The match ended with the Blackjacks getting themselves disqualified and retaining their title.

Soon Houston bid a fond farewell to Mil. He was leaving. Chances are he wouldn't be back for awhile. Next stop, Atlanta, Georgia.

The scene at the airport in Georgia was the same. Dozens of reporters and fans came to greet the sensational Mascaras.

"It's a pleasure to be in your fair city," a cordial Mascaras told a local fan. "I can't wait to see your wonderful city. I'm sure it's beautiful."

After a brief ride through the city, Mil hurried to the arena. He was going to wrestle "Wildman" Jack Armstrong.

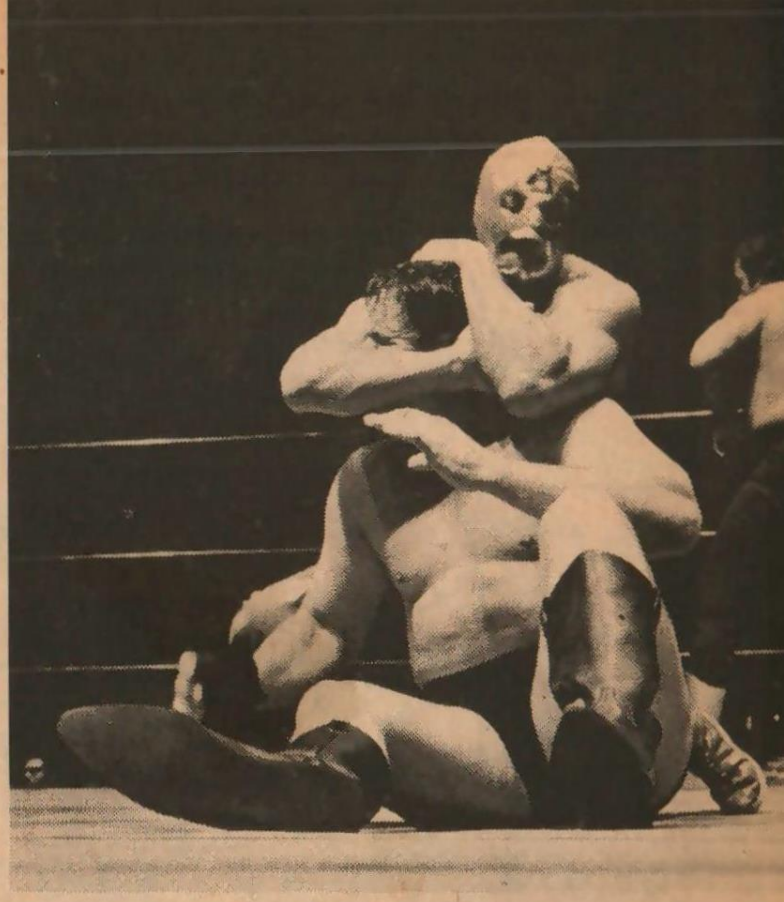
And Mil disappointed no one. He was great, as usual.

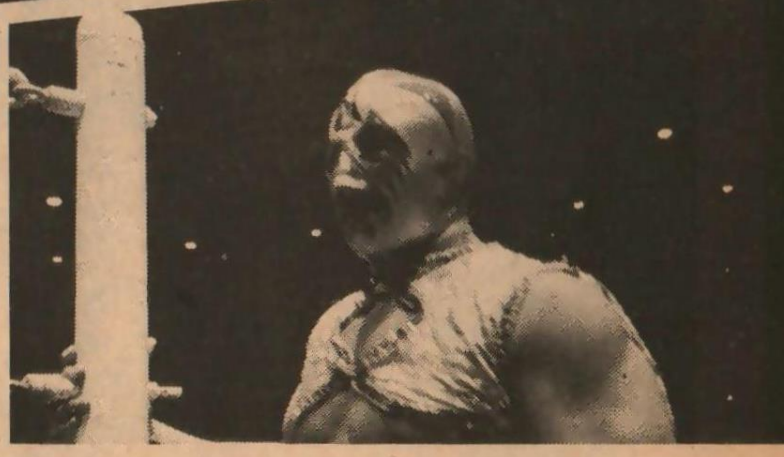
Mil left Georgia. Destination? Unknown. But we have a feeling Mil's headed back to Japan and his next stop will be in front of the cameras again.

Most everyone in wrestling wants Mil to stick around in one place longer. His friends miss him and the fans crave to see much more of him. But Mil's not that kind of guy.

"I want to keep on the go all the time," he explains. "I want to live life to the fullest, see new places, do new things. It makes life so much more wonderful."

And the fans in the U.S. agree *their* lives would be more wonderful—if Mil would only stick around awhile! □





Mil has Blackjack Mulligan in a sleeper hold (above). Mascaras (below) always keeps travelling.

Stomper tried to rearrange Harley Race's face. He did, but some changes also took place on Stomper's face— some bloody ones PHOTOS By GARY KALYNCHUK

"I'LL S

"I'LL MASH YOUR FACE IN!"

THE NOSE OF Harley Race is still sticking out rather than spread all over his face but you can't blame the Canadian Stomper for that.

Stomper did everything in his considerable power to mesh all of Race's features into an ugly blob of bleeding flesh. Be it sailing foot-first into Race's face or smashing it into a ringside seat, Stomper was willing to try.

"After hating Race for so long," Stomper says, "it's gotten to the point where the sight of his face makes me sick. He walks into the building and I want to rearrange his puss the most painful way possible. There's nothing too brutal or agonizing for Harley Race!"

Canadian Stomper refuses to talk about his hatred for Race but his friend, one of the Australian Kiwis, thinks he knows the reason.

"When Stomper was just breaking in," he believes, "his first real beating was at the hands of Harley Race. Race was only a little bit more experienced at the time but at that level a little goes a long way.

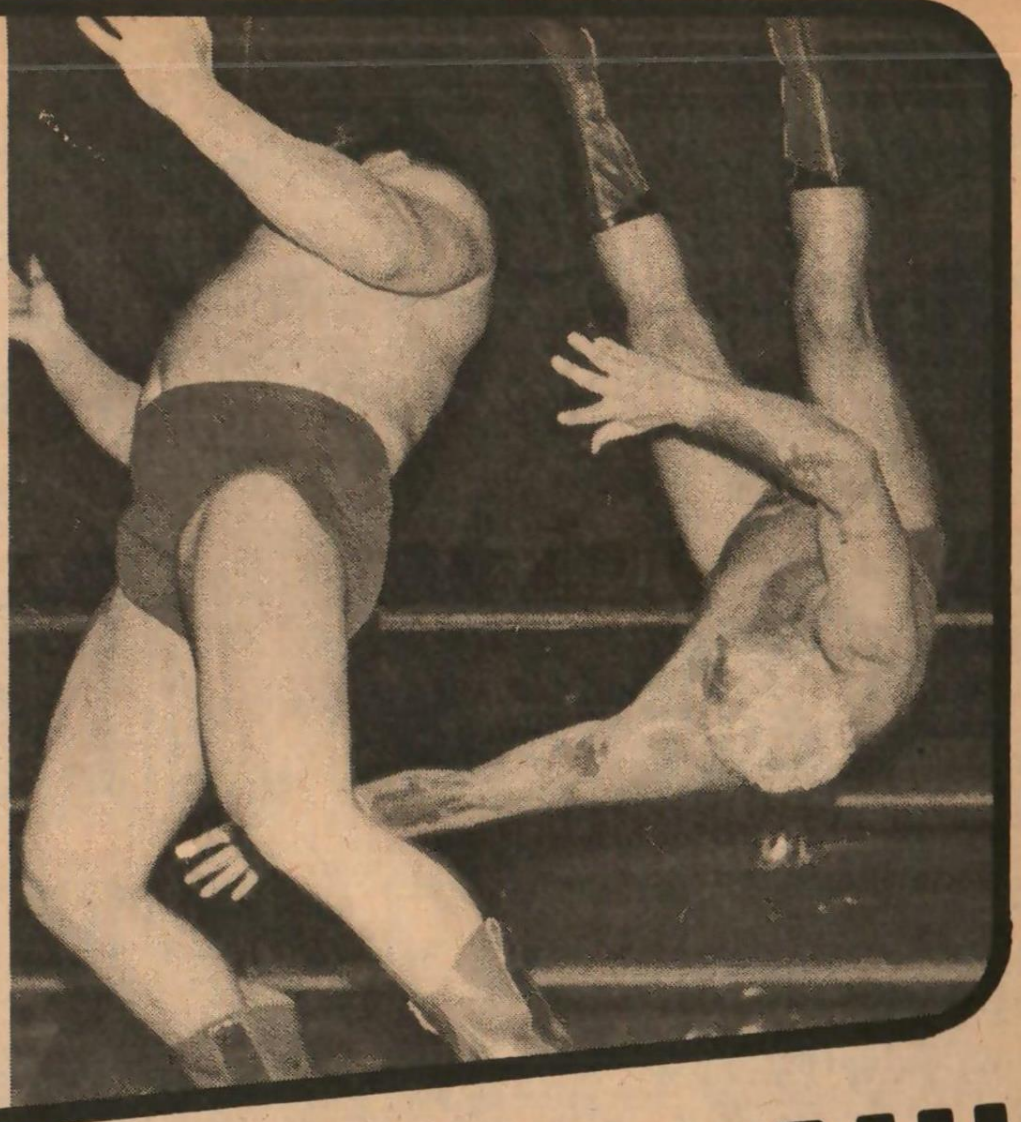
"Harley then was Harley now— a brutal rat who learned the rules only so he could break them. Stomper wasn't ready for anyone like Harley. He was lucky to escape with his life.

"Stomper has never forgotten the yells of the crowd as he left the ring in humiliation. Since then, he's done everything possible to make the crowd scream when he wrestles with Harley. Only this time the roar is because Race is being beaten to a bloody pulp."

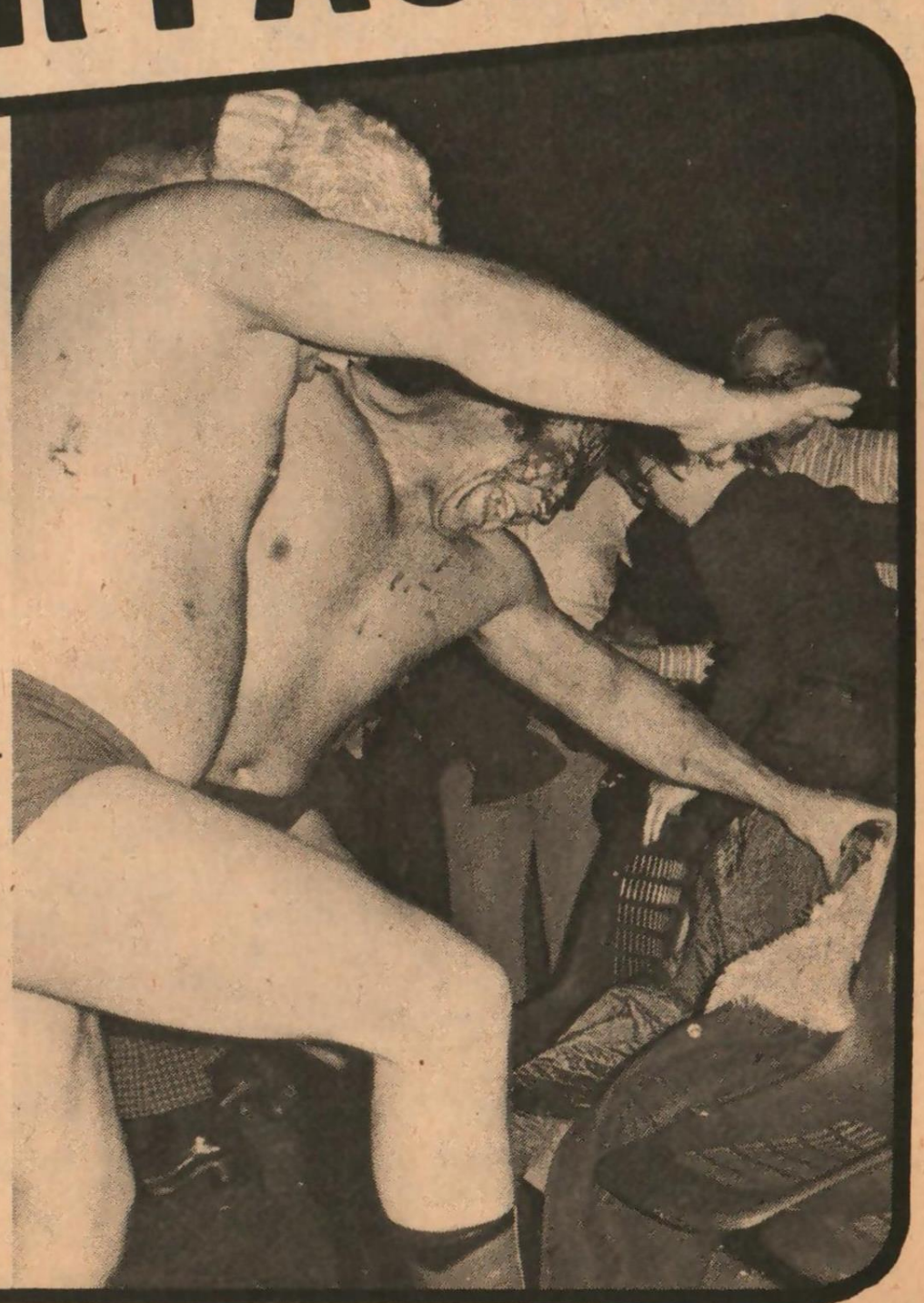
In their match, Stomper did everything possible to make the crowd yell. However, when he heard the screams, he wished it was for another reason.

If eyes can betray bloodlust, Stomper's eyes betrayed it when he entered the ring. They were shining with hatred. If a veteran like Race can

(Continued on page 50)

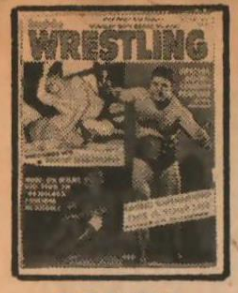


Right: Canadian Stomper flips Harley Race high in the air and sends him hard to the mat. It looks like he will get his revenge against Race for a cruel lesson early in Stomper's career, one Stomper has never been able to forget. However, it is just the start of a see-saw match that will injure both men.



Late in the match, a badly bleeding Stomper smashes Harley Race's head into the ringside seats. This makes Race just as bloody and just as angry as Stomper will ever be. The match will deteriorate into brutal brawl with no winner. And nothing will be resolved by the bloody heads and faces.

BACK ISSUES OF INSIDE WRESTLING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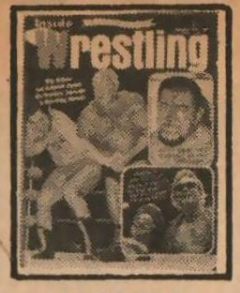
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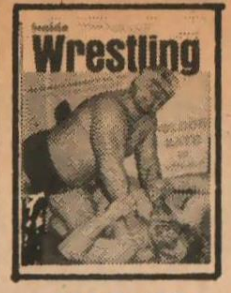
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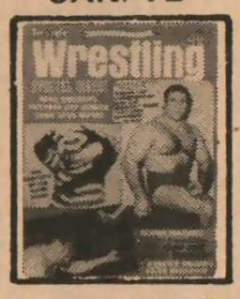
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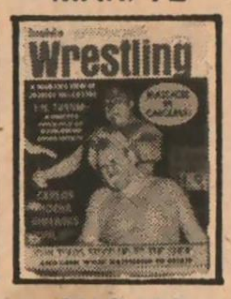
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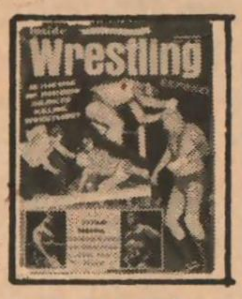
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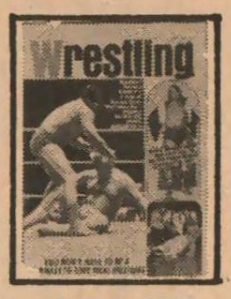
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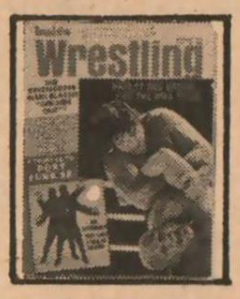
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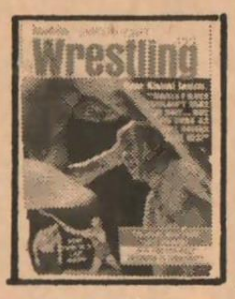
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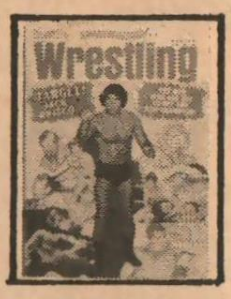
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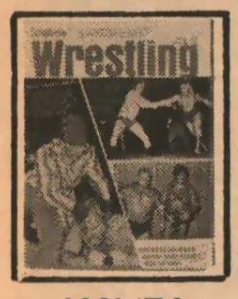
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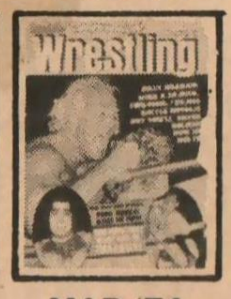
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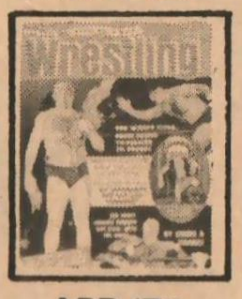
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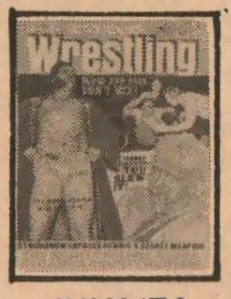
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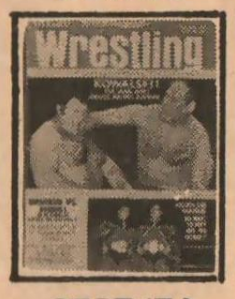
AUG/74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OCT/74

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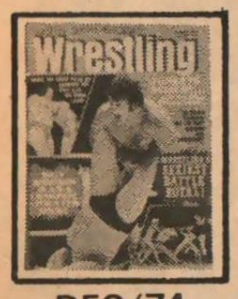
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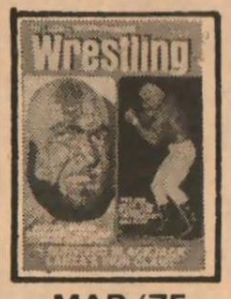
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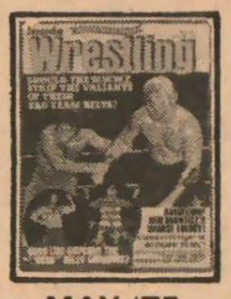
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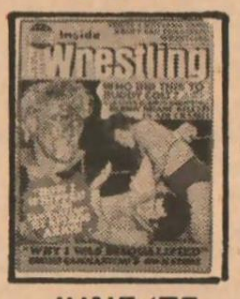
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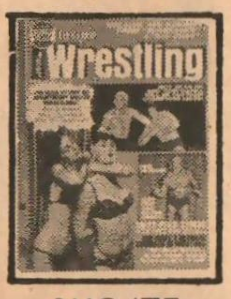
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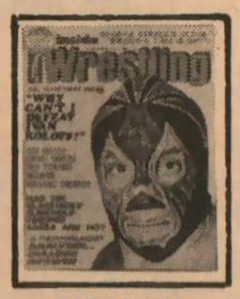
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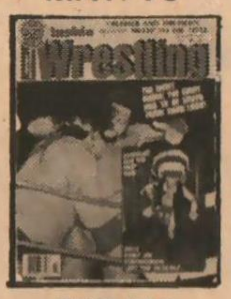
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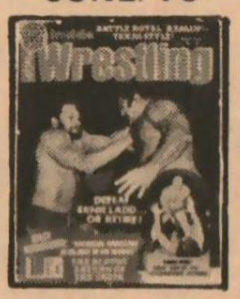
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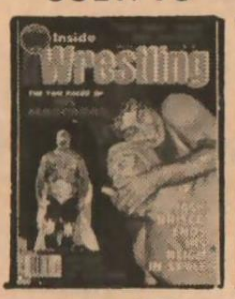
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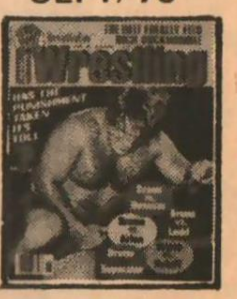
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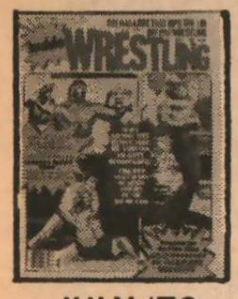
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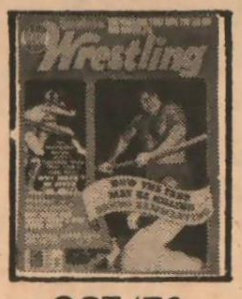
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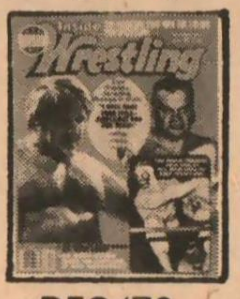
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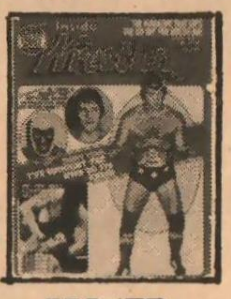
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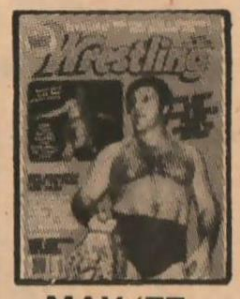
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JUNE/77

JULY/77

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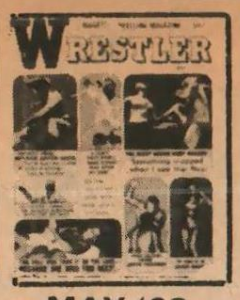
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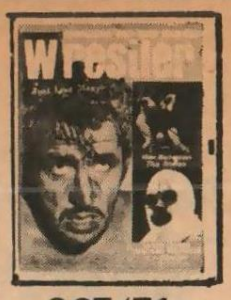
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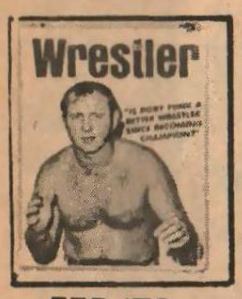
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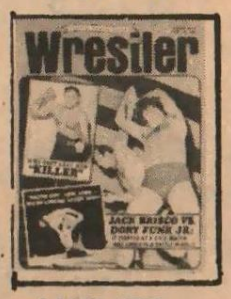
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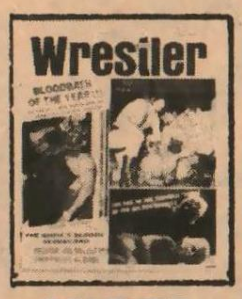
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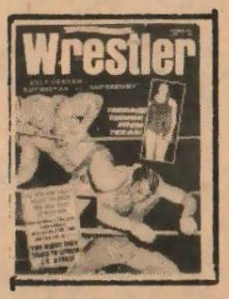
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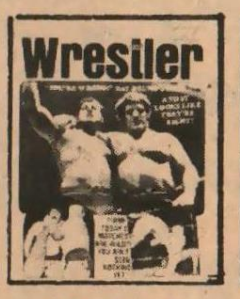
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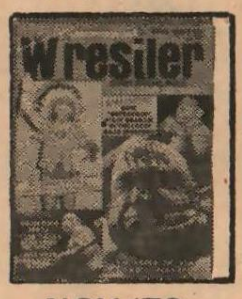
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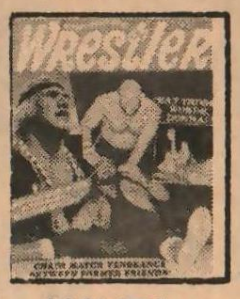
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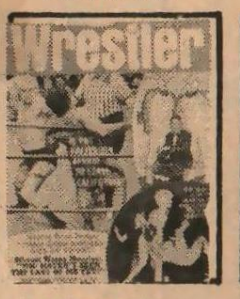
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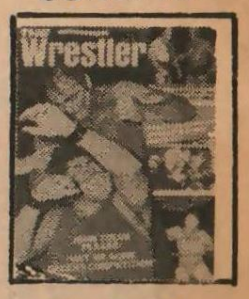
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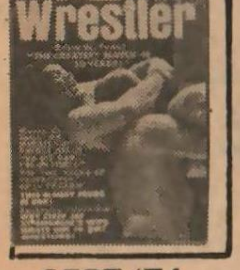
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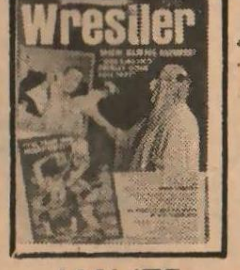
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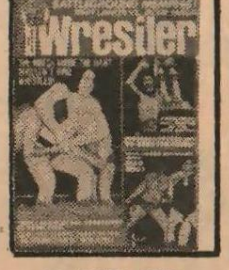
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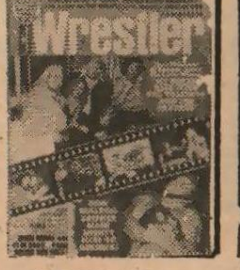
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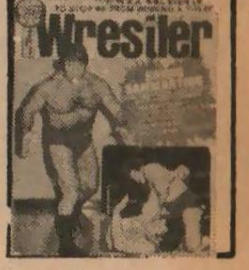
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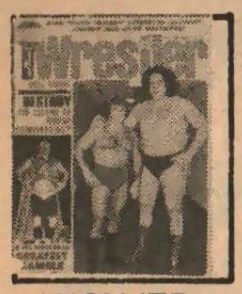
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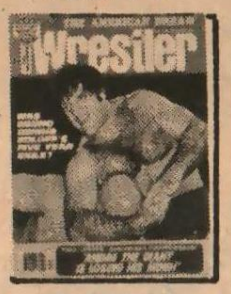
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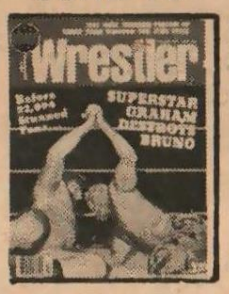

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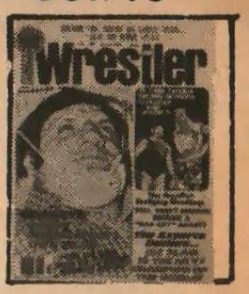
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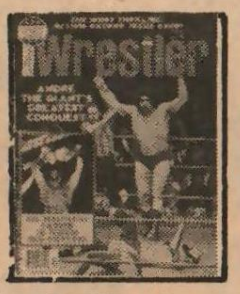
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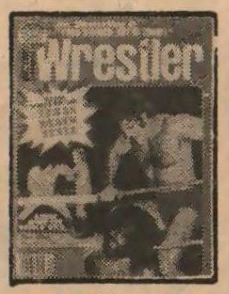
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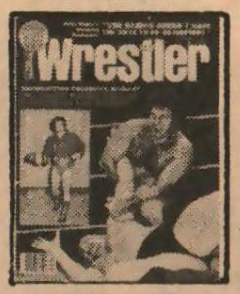
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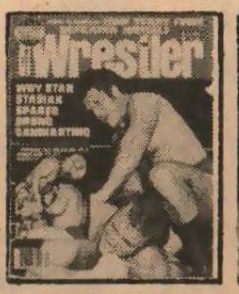
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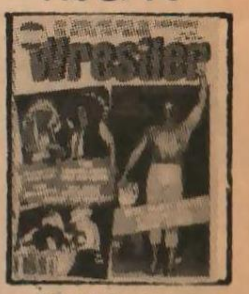
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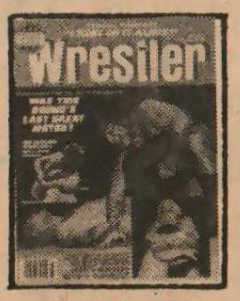
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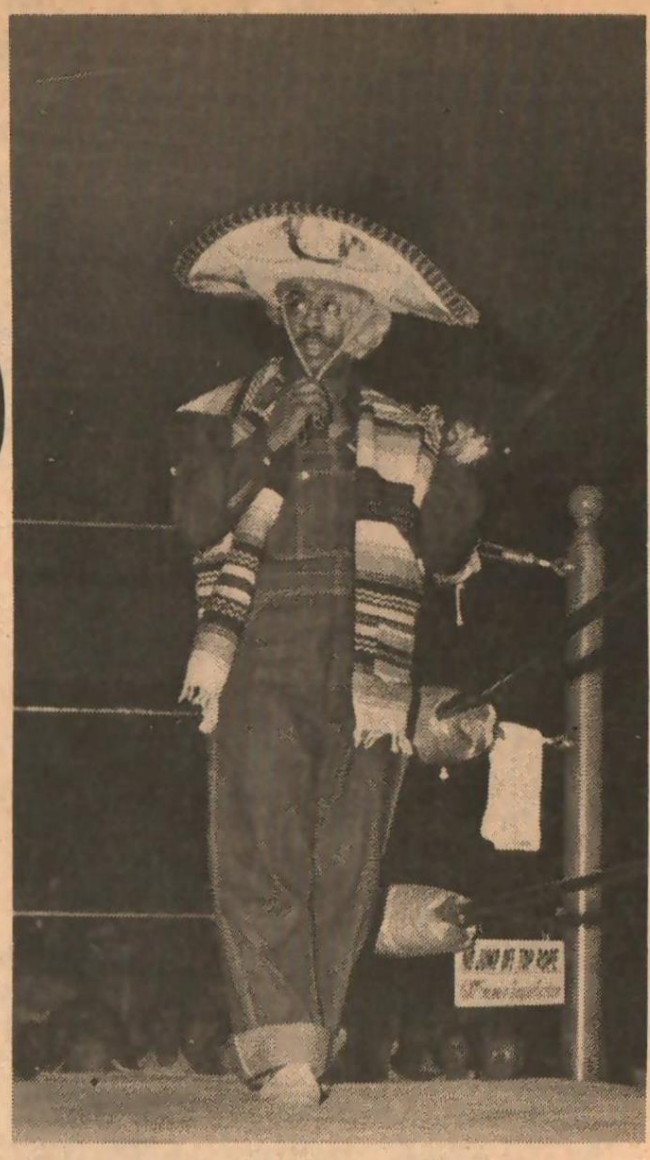
WHEN RICKY ROMERO SEES RED— WATCH OUT!



Ricky Romero (above) is very proud of his Mexican heritage. JoJo, Hank James' valet, (top right) thought it would be a good joke to make light of that pride. To show how mistaken JoJo is, Ricky chases the valet from the ring, swearing revenge against JoJo and Hank James.

JoJo and Hank James thought it'd be a lotta laughs to mock Ricky Romero's Mexican ancestry. They found out it's no fun at all

Exclusive Photos By Bill Beach

THE SINS OF the valet can be visited upon his master.

Ricky Romero is very proud of his Mexican heritage. It is a foolish opponent who tries to belittle his nationality.

Hank James and his valet JoJo have always shown more courage than compassion. When James was scheduled to wrestle Romero, he and JoJo decided to be clever.

"What we'll do," James decided, "is put you in a sombrero and poncho! Then you can walk into the ring and do a dumb Mexican thing!"

"Right on!" screamed JoJo, "but I'll also wear my wig!"

"Why?"

"'Cause I want to wear my wig."

So on the night of the match, James and costumed JoJo entered the ring. Romero was too angry to move.

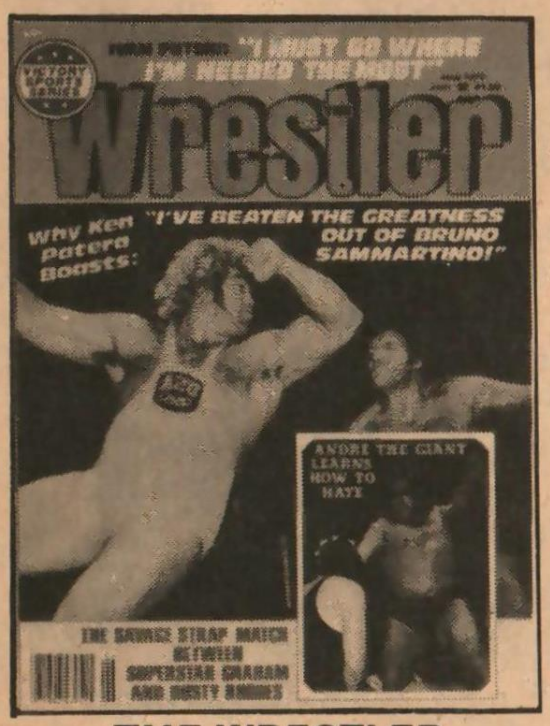
"Anyone got anything for heartburn?" JoJo asked the crowd in a bad but thick Mexican accent. "Romero wishes he was half as strong as Tijuana water. Speaking of Tijuana, watch your mouth. Do you like my outfit? It's the latest thing in 'Mexican Groom.'"

Ricky had heard much too much. His eyes and fists flashing, Romero flew at JoJo, who ceased to find anything funny. JoJo ran for cover behind James. That was alright with Romero. He went after Hank.

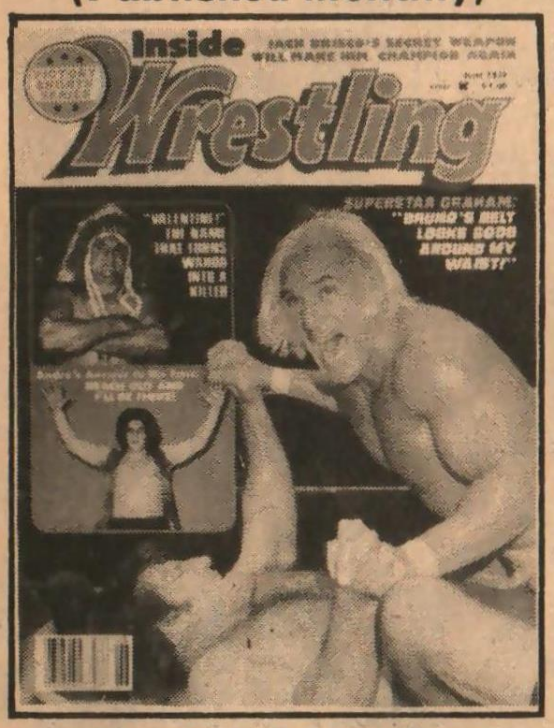
The referee signalled the match to begin so that the brawl would be official. Romero was seeing red

(Continued on page 52)

WRESTLING'S GREATEST SUBSCRIPTION DEAL


"I MUST GO WHERE I'M NEEDED THE MOST"
Wrestler
Why Ken Patera Boasts:
"I'VE BEATEN THE GREATNESS OUT OF BRUNO SAMMARTINO!"
ANDRE THE GIANT LEARNS HOW TO HATE

THE WRESTLER
(Published Monthly)



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"Handsome Jim" and "Luscious John" claim to be so superior to other wrestlers that they now must look to other sports for a challenge!

ALBANO AND THE VALIANTS: "WE—ALL IN ON ALI, FRAZIER A

FOR MOST WRESTLERS, simply attaining a championship of any kind is something they consider the pinnacle of their career. However, for the W.W.W.F. tag team champion Valiant Brothers and their manager Lou Albano, being world champions is not nearly enough.

"Listen, baby. We're the greatest, the best, the most wonderful thing to happen to this sport ever," says the talkative Mr. Albano. "When you say 'wrestling,' you MEAN Valiants. And I, the great Captain Lou Albano, brought them to this area."

It was then that Albano said something to make even the calmest observer recoil in amazement.

"Now my boys, Johnny and Jimmy, the great Valiants, the world's champs —we want Muhammad Ali. That's right. My men want to take on this man Ali. We will show you all who the greatest.

And after we finish beating up on him, we want Joe Frazier, George Foreman, and any other bozo you can mention. We want 'em all on the same night."

When asked if either of the Valiants can box, John Valiant yelled, "Baby, I boxed everything. I boxed grapefruits, oranges, Mickey Mouse and Little Boy Blue. And I beat 'em too."

"We are so great," adds brother Handsome Jim, "we don't have to train. Just throw us in the ring with Ali, Frazier or any one of them boys, and we will show you what a *real* champ is."

Albano swears he has tried on many occasions to set up a bout with one or all of those boxers.

"Yeah. I invited that Ali to watch my two champs wrestle, but that guy was too much of a coward to show up."

When it was mentioned that if Ali or Frazier would accept, possibly the Valiants would be the ones to not show up, Luscious John exploded.

"We'll be there, baby! You just lay the money out and me and my brother and the Captain will be there. But just make sure you have enough money."

The three men were asked why they weren't satisfied with being the tag team champs.

"It gets boring," said Jim Valiant, "beating the same twerps every time. Ain't nobody around here who could give us a good match. We've beaten Garea and that pineapple Ho so many times it ain't no fun any more."

Lou Albano agreed. "That's right. My boys whipped everyone. Even the supposedly great Bruno Sammartino and his buddy, Chief Jay Weakbow. My boys will be champs until they retire."

When Albano was asked if he thought a match with the Valiants and one of the boxers would make money, Lou laughed.

"Listen, boy. When you want to know about money, baby, you speak to the Captain. I know how to make it and I know how to spend it. And so do my champs."

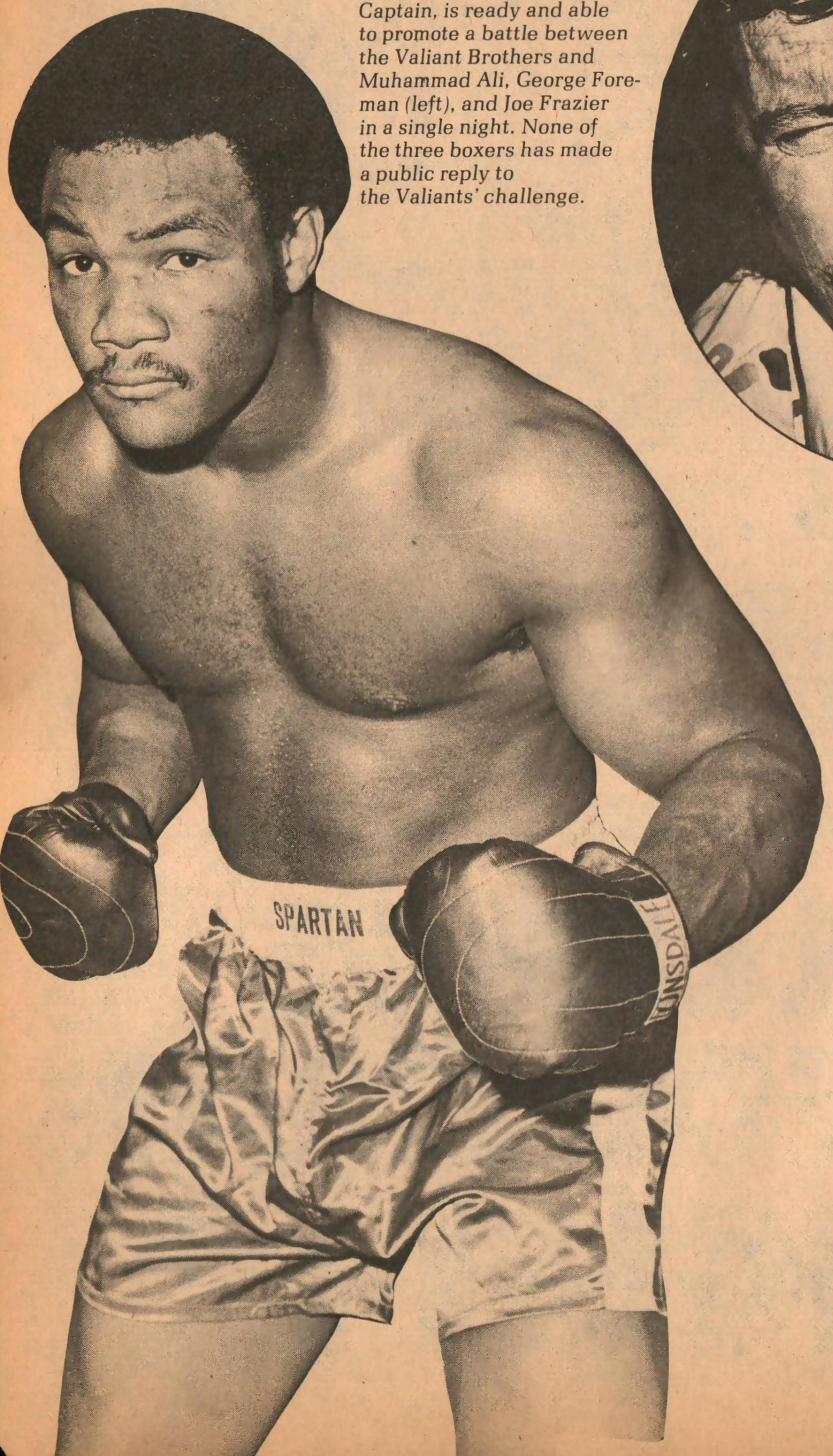
"You better believe we do," said John. "On the way from New York to Philadelphia for a match, we tipped the stewardess on the airplane. My brother even tips the toll collectors on the highway. When you talk about the Valiants, you are talking about first class, daddy."

"And as for a match between my champs and Ali, Foreman, Frazier, or the man in the moon," Albano went on, "it would make a fortune. But only if my boys are in it. Jim and John have sold out Madison Square Garden 23 times in a row now. That ain't hay, baby!

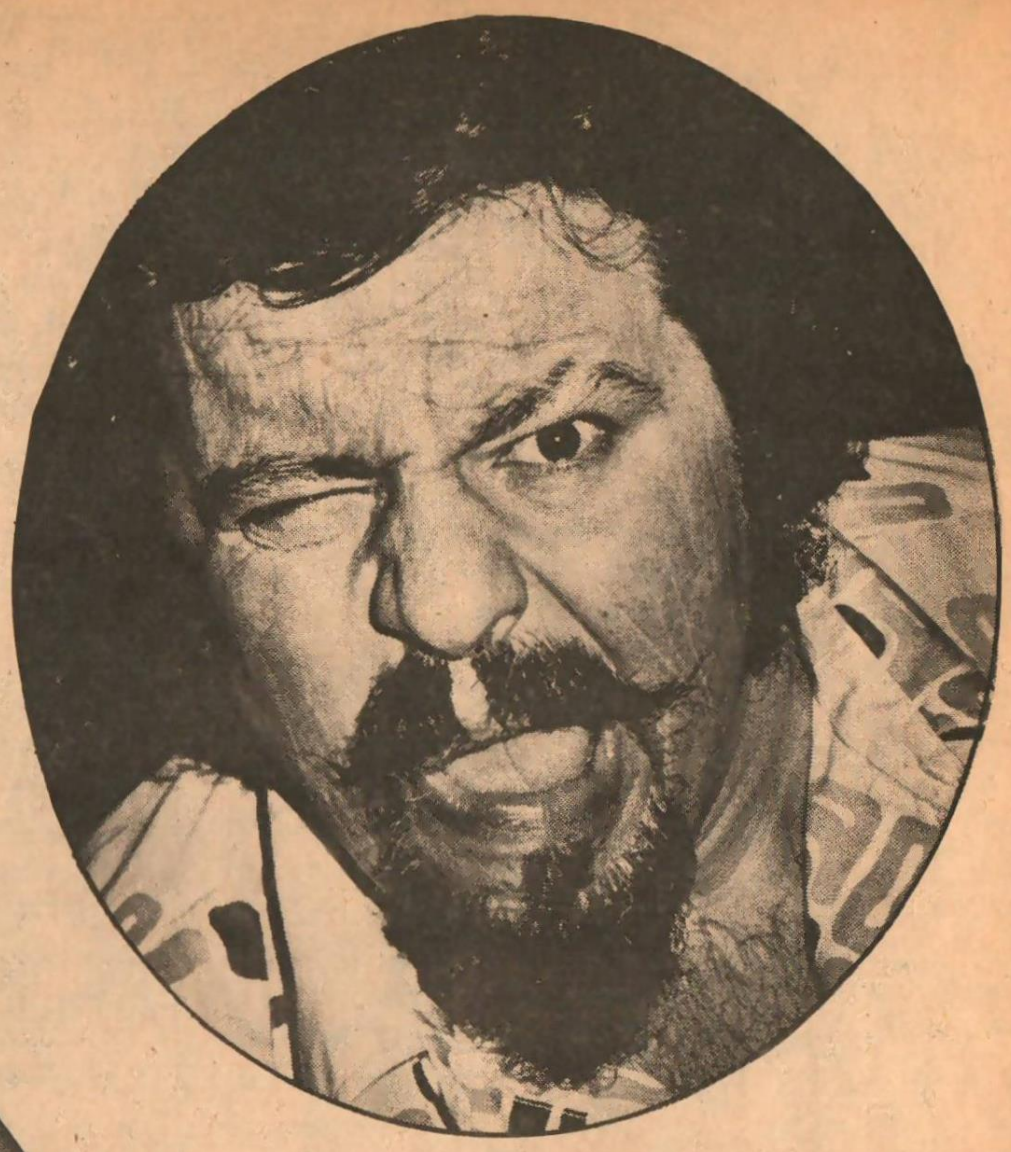
"I, Lou Albano, the great Captain, am making this challenge public. Ali, Foreman, Frazier—any one of you clowns or all three of you—if you guys want to make some *real* money, just agree to meet my boys. We can wrestle, we can box, we can sing, we can dance, we can have a beauty contest. It don't matter. We are the best at everything!"

When he was asked to comment on

CHALLENGE ND FOREMAN E NIGHT!"



Lou Albano (right), the Captain, is ready and able to promote a battle between the Valiant Brothers and Muhammad Ali, George Foreman (left), and Joe Frazier in a single night. None of the three boxers has made a public reply to the Valiants' challenge.



Ali's boxing ability, Luscious John offered this analysis.

"The man's pretty good. But that's only because my brother and me became wrestlers and not boxers. Either one of us would be good enough to beat any of those creeps. But boxing's loss was wrestling's gain."

"As always," offered Handsome Jim, "my brother is absolutely correct. We decided to become wrestlers because there's more mazuma in this sport. Money talks, daddy, and when it talks it says 'Valiant.'"

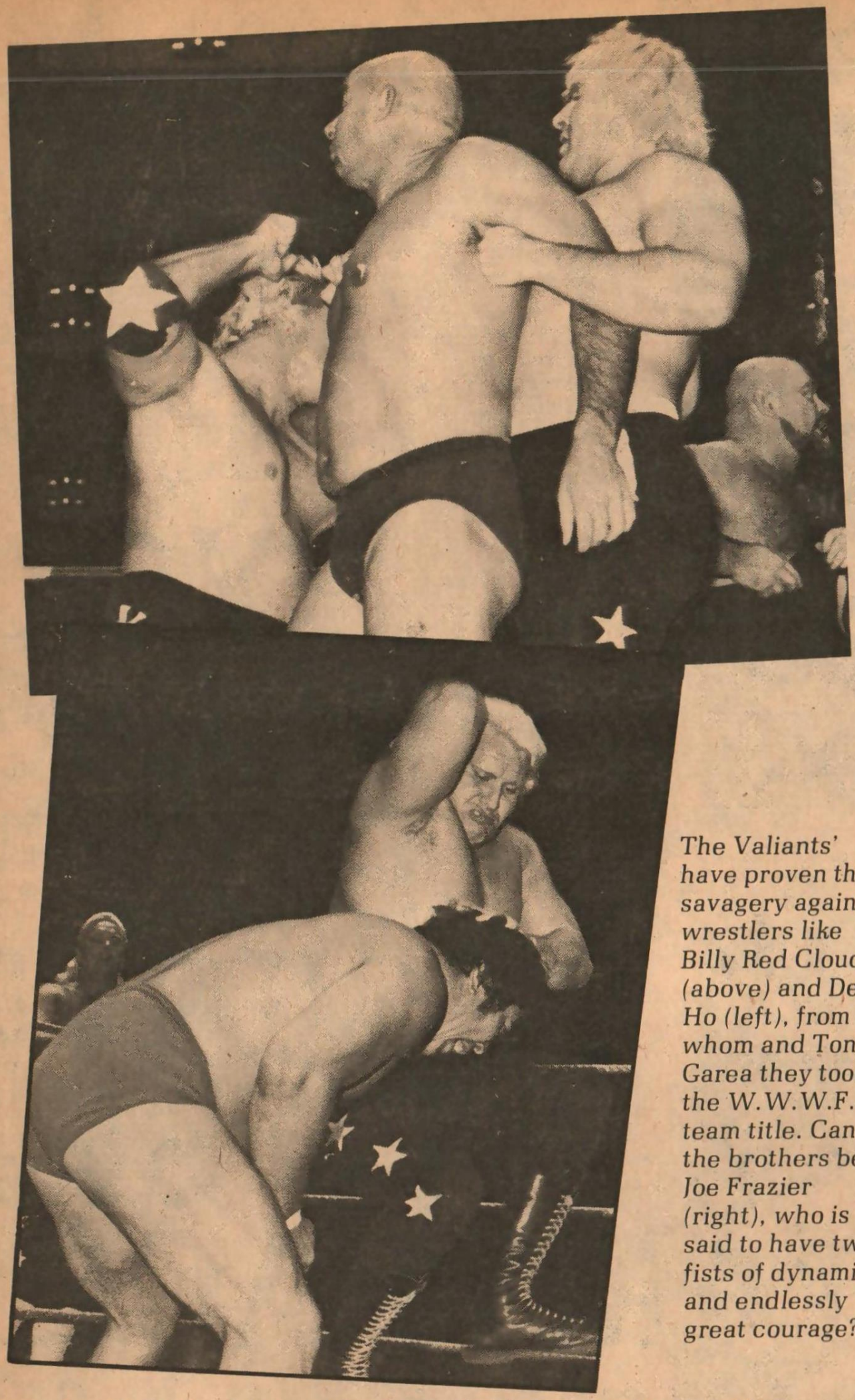
"My beautiful boys can whip any two or three or 10 men in the world," the Captain continued. "As soon as one of those bimbos would get close enough to try to land a punch, he would find himself flat on his back. A boxer is no match for even a lousy wrestler. You can only imagine what would happen if my Valiants, who are the best wrestlers in history, baby, got in the ring with those fools."

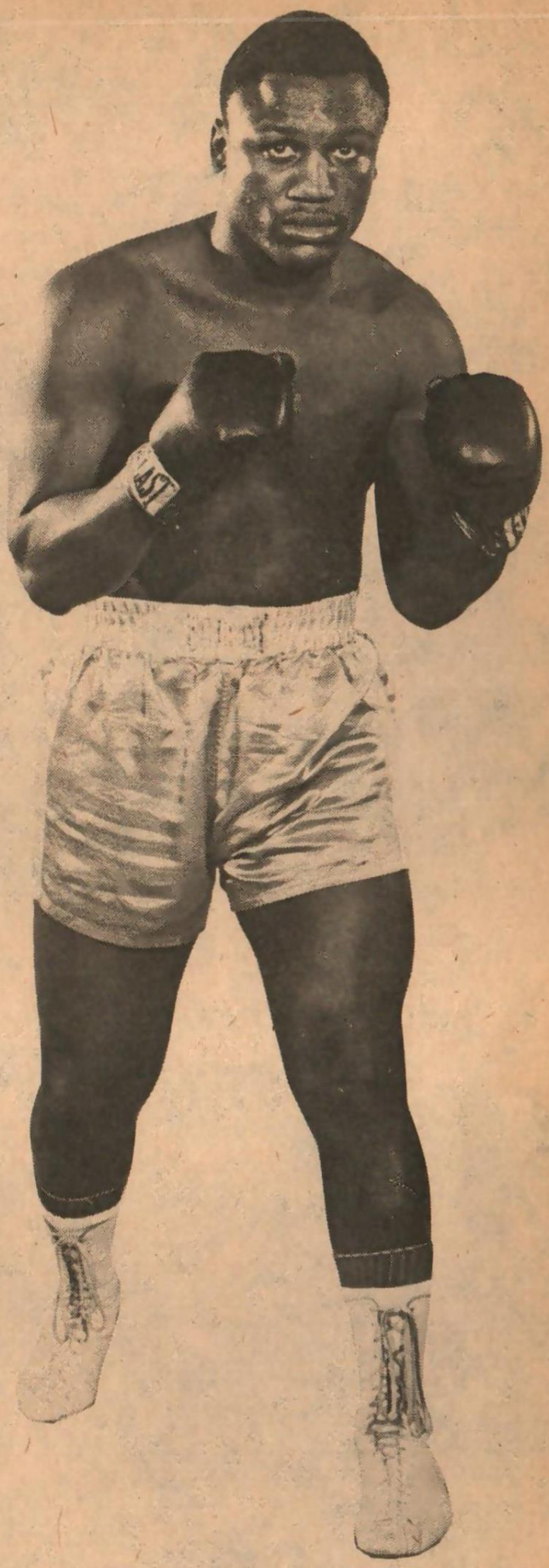
Jim Valiant offered this "expert" opinion on a bout between him and Ali.

"You got to understand, daddy, I won't try and beat him too fast. I'll let the bozo sweat for a while. Maybe about two or three minutes. Then I'll beat him to a pulp!"

"And I, baby," cut in John, "will then beat up on the pulp!"

"My boys are right," said the Captain. "And after we're finished with Mr. Muhammad, we will then humili-





The Valiants' have proven their savagery against wrestlers like Billy Red Cloud (above) and Dean Ho (left), from whom and Tony Garea they took the W.W.W.F. tag team title. Can the brothers beat Joe Frazier (right), who is said to have two fists of dynamite and endlessly great courage?

ate Joe Frazier and George Foreman, all on the same night. Maybe even all three at the same time."

Albano was then asked where the bout would be held.

"That's the big problem, baby. Ain't no place big enough. That crummy little Astrodome is too damn small. The Coliseum in Los Angeles only seats 100,000 people. We need someplace for about one million fans. And even that wouldn't be big enough.

"You'd better believe it, daddy," John Valiant added. "The Valiants are the biggest thing in the world today. They know about us in England, France, Russia, China, Mars, Uranus, everywhere. Everywhere!"

"We would have to put the match on television," decided Jim, "or else there would be revolutions throughout the world. Billions of women screaming, 'We want to see the Valiants!' Yeah, we'd have to televise the bout."

"And it would have a rating of 100," Albano declared. "Every man, woman, child, animal, plant and insect would watch."

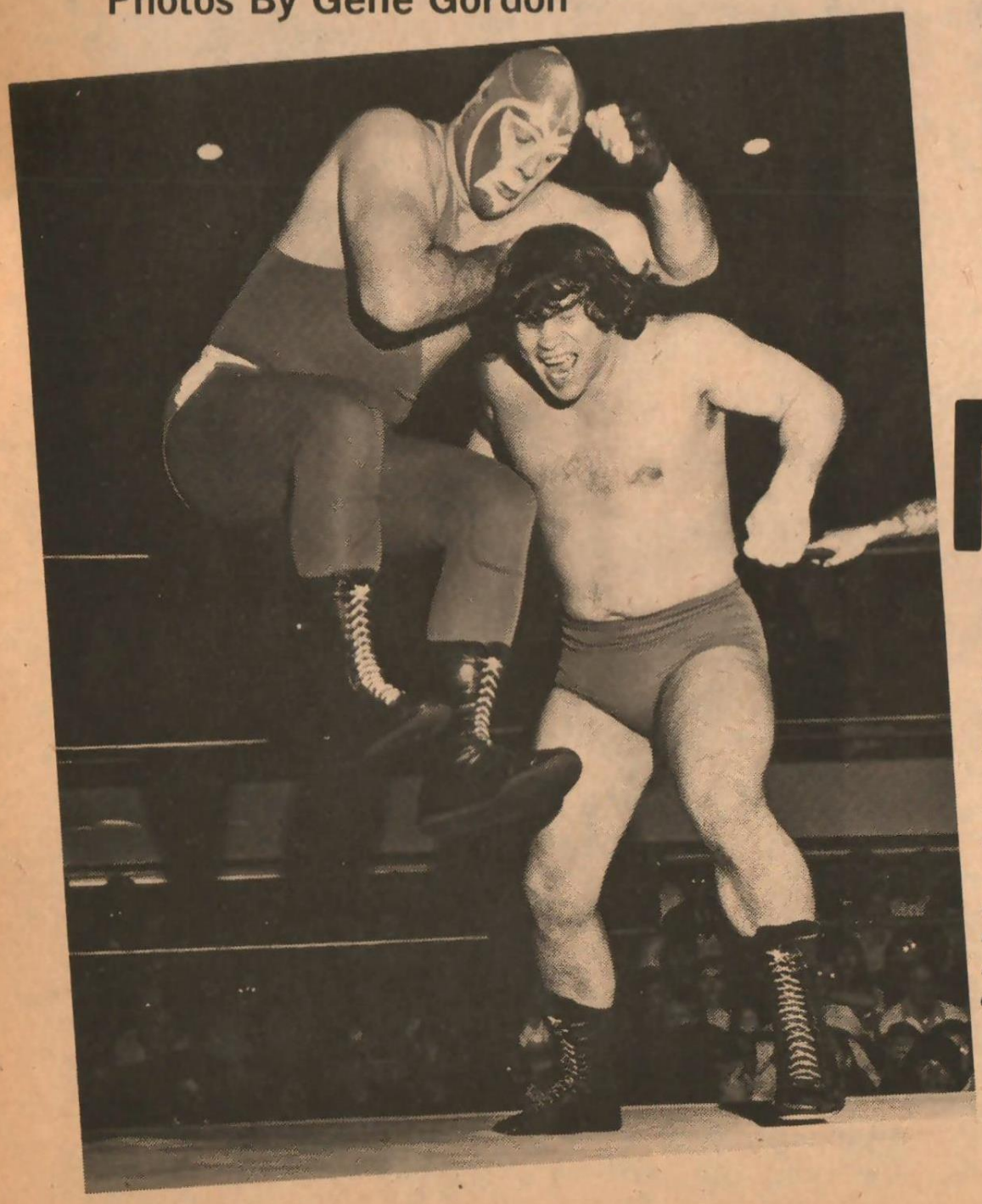
To insure fairness, this magazine asked former Golden Gloves bantamweight contender and boxing expert Randy Gordon how a wrestler would fare against a boxer.

"I really give the Valiants a shot at beating Ali," Gordon said. "Either John or Jim could probably out-wrestle Muhammad easily. In a boxing match it would be tougher. However, I've sparred with John Valiant and he broke my nose. The man can really handle himself as a boxer."

At this point there has been no reply from Ali. We don't know if Muhammad looks on the challenge with bemused interest or serious consideration. A match between the champions of these two sports would certainly be exciting. According to Albano it would also be incredibly lucrative. □

The Super Destroyer sends Jerry Brisco on his way across the ring with a powerful arm whip. Who is the man behind the mask? He's not saying. His purpose? To make life miserable for fans and wrestlers.

Photos By Gene Gordon



Jerry's about to feel the devastating power of The Super Destroyer's skull cracker. The masked man has a wide knowledge of holds and dirty tactics.

"YOU CREEPS DON'T DESERVE TO SEE MY FACE!"

TO BECOME THE first masked champion is the ambition that is driving Super Destroyer to whatever is necessary, no matter how illegal or dangerous, to win.

"I'm going to be champion!" Super Destroyer claims. "I'm going to be the top man within the year. And what's more, there'll be no clown gushing that I'm a 'people's champion'. I want that understood now. As far as I'm concerned, after a fan buys a ticket, he could be pushed off a cliff for all I care."

His hatred of the fans is one of the reasons he wears a mask.

"It's impossible to really know someone who wears a mask," he believes. "A fan can't identify with someone he doesn't know. When I'm champion the fans can hate me but they can't love me. I'll make them miserable. I'll never make them happy. I'll be the only champion in history who doesn't share the glory with the fans. I made it on my own and I'm going to enjoy it on my own. I'll break both legs of any fan who cheers for me!"

Nobody doubts the Super Destroyer's sincerity. There are many theories going around as to why the Super Destroyer hates fans so much. The most widely repeated is one for-

mulated by Jerry Brisco.

"While I was wrestling him," Jerry remembers, "I noticed he became more evil and more brutal as fans cheered louder for me. It's as if he doesn't want to win as much as make the fans unhappy.

"My guess is that when he was a preliminary wrestler, he was scientific and respected. I'm sure the fans loved him and he loved the fans loving him.

"Now everyone learns that if you're a scientific wrestler you take a lot of punishment from guys who couldn't care less about the rules. He had to choose between the fans and the beating. It's not an easy choice and every wrestler must make it.

"Super Destroyer decided to be a dirty wrestler. He soon resented the fans when they began to boo him. He considered them traitors, as they considered him a traitor. The resentment turned to hatred and now Super Destroyer wants to punish the fans."

Whatever the reason, the masked wrestler is ready and willing to be-

As Jerry comes off the ropes he's caught in The Super Destroyer's face claw. The masked man wears a glove on his claw hand. Many wrestlers think he hides a foreign object in there. "I don't," he contends. "It is just to protect my hand from injury."

He calls himself the "Super Destroyer" and he wears a mask. Why? Because when he "wins the title" he doesn't want anyone to know the real identity of the "next champion"

come the most hated and reviled champion in history. And he's ready to batter anyone who comes in his way.

During his match against Jerry Brisco, the Super Destroyer showed a knowledge of vicious moves that may be second to none in the sport. He gouged, kicked, punched, and may or may not have used a loaded glove.

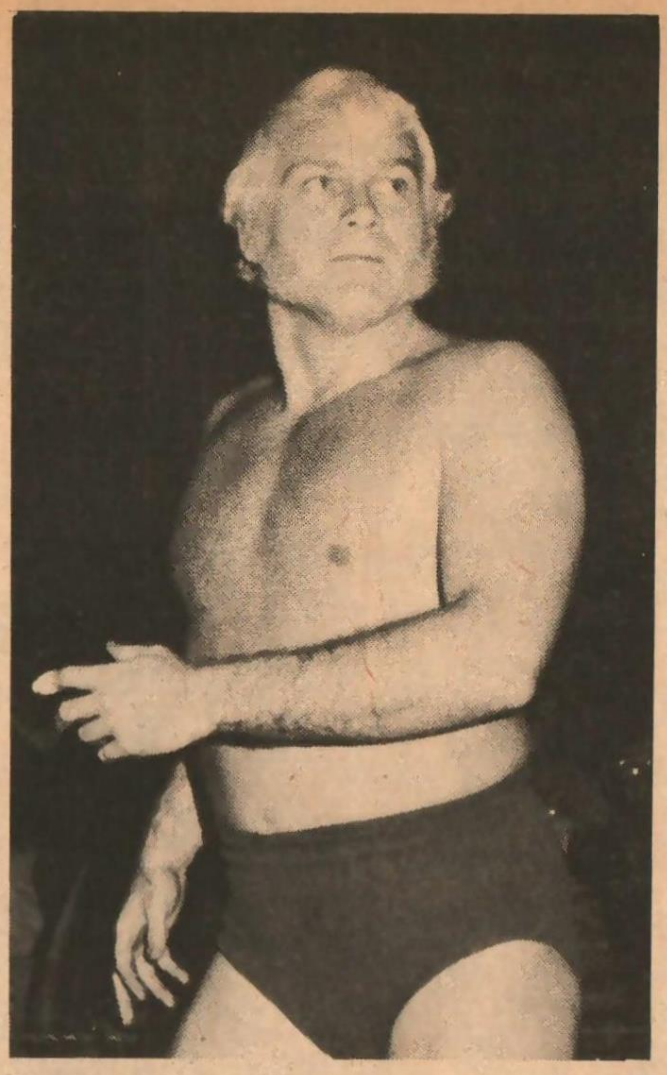
"There's no doubt in my mind," Brisco contends, "that there are small spikes in that glove that could rip skin off wherever they scrape against. It's a weapon, there's no doubt about it. The referee didn't see it because the points are so fine as to be undetectable. But believe me, I sure felt them!"

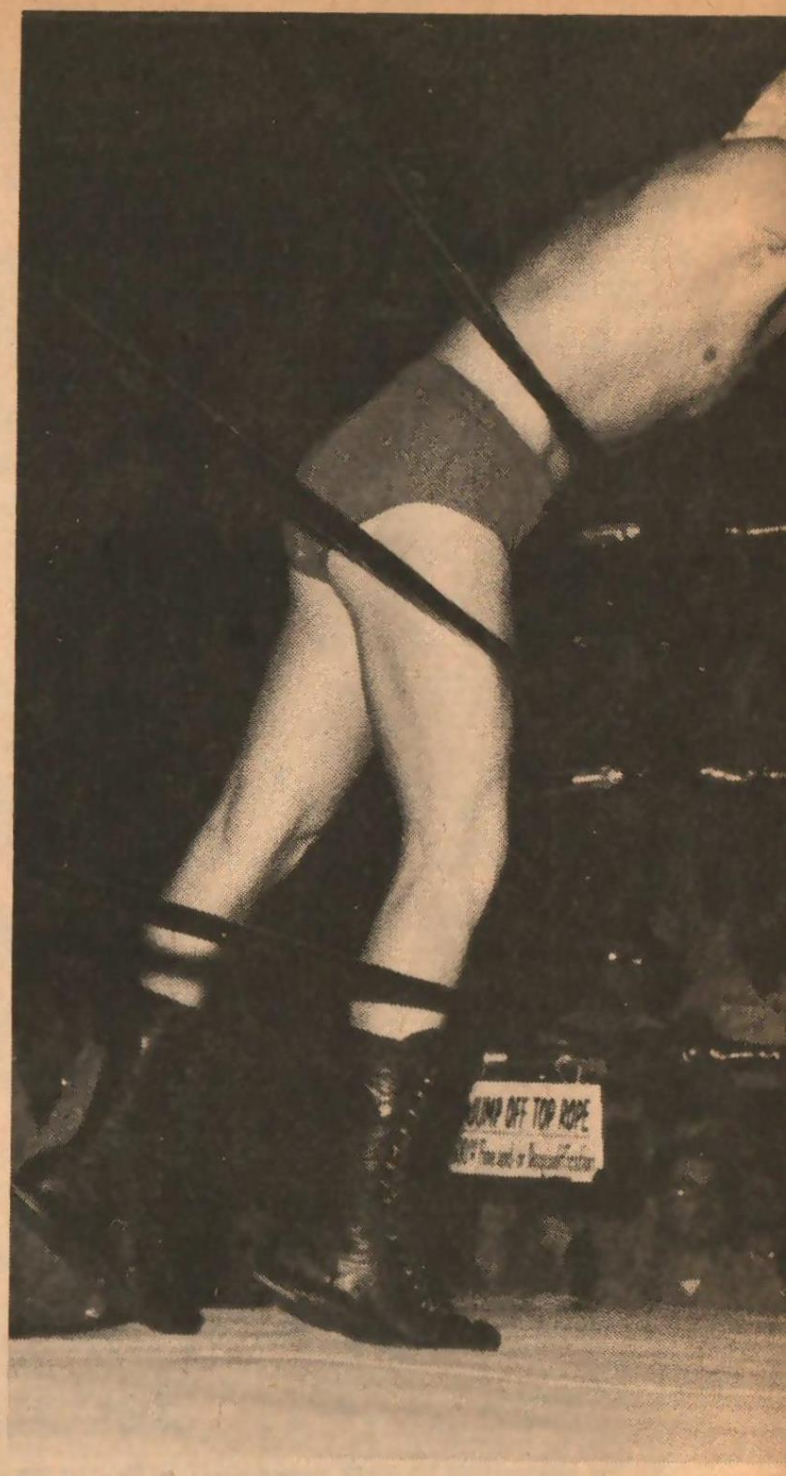
"That's typical," Super Destroyer snorts, "of a popular wrestler who the fans love. They make excuses for getting hurt. And those moron fans believe these snakes! He knows those clods will believe any dumb lie he tells them so he says I have a spiked glove.

(Continued on page 54)

Showing off his vast variety of holds, The Super Destroyer punishes Jerry Brisco with a combination claw hold and surfboard. "The fans will never have the pleasure of seeing my face," he stresses. "My identity will always remain a top secret."

PHOTOS BY BILL BEACH





THE $10,000 JIM DILLON CAN'T GIVE AWAY

WITH A CRUEL, satisfied smile, Jim Dillon contemplated the match about to take place. He would gladly give Ernie Ladd $10,000 after it was over—if Dick Murdoch's career was over as well.

Since Dillon had first announced the bounty on Murdoch's head, many wrestlers had tried to end Dick's career and just as many had failed. Now, Dillon felt the man to do the job had arrived. If any man could destroy Murdoch, Ernie Ladd was the man.

With a smug sneer, Ladd sat waiting for his confrontation. Dillon worried over him like a mother hen.

"You feeling alright?", Dillon kept asking. "Need anything? Anything at all? Too hot? Too cold?"

"Shut up!" Ladd said angrily.

"Right!" Dillon agreed. "Won't say another word. Just sit here and get psyched up for killing Murdoch. And when it's all over, and the doctor is shaking his head over Murdoch's stretcher, I'll give you a certified bank check for $10,000."

"You better believe you're going to give me that check!" Ladd snapped. "Now leave me alone."

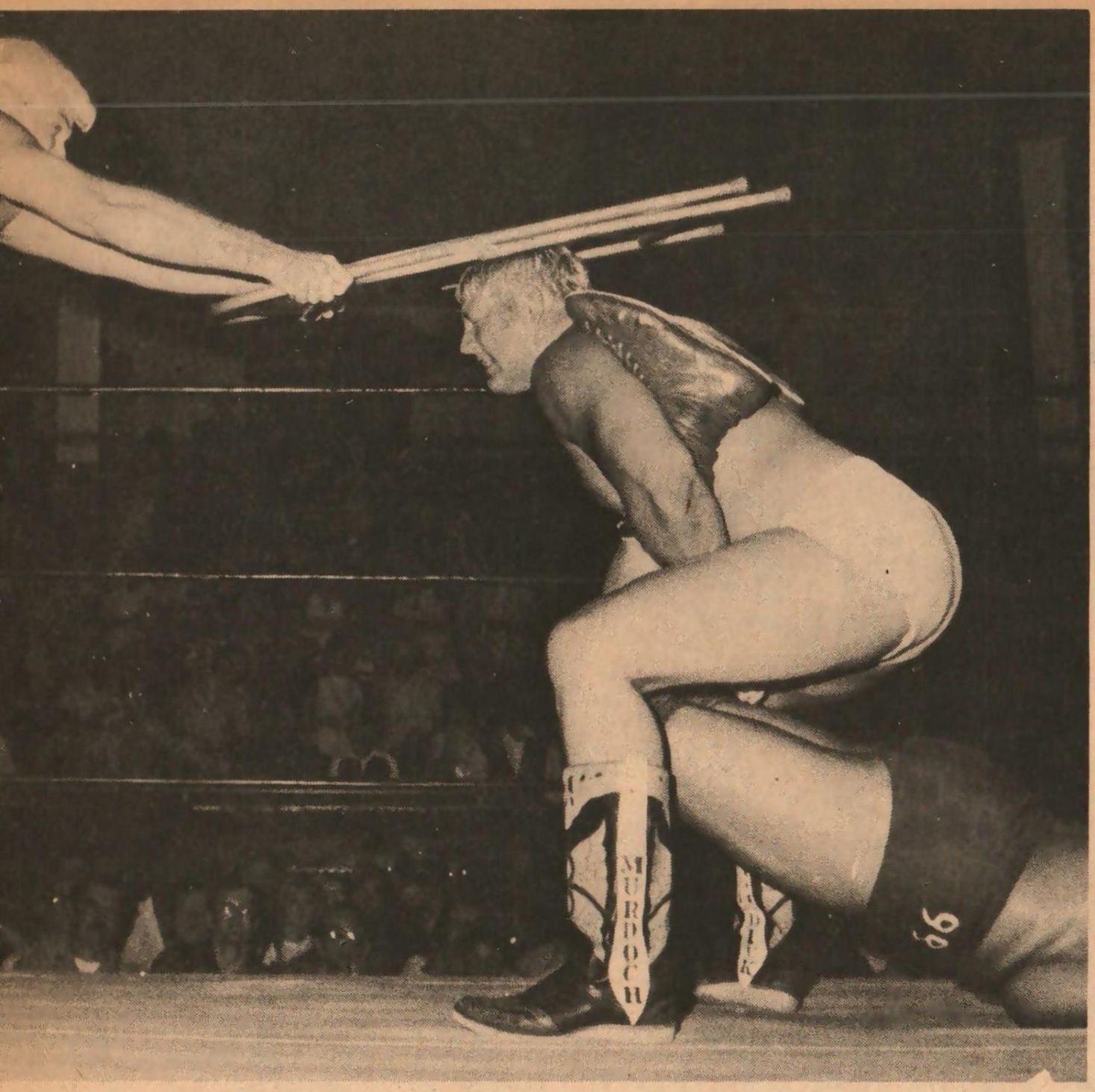
Dillon rubbed his hands together and took his ringside seat to watch the match which he hoped would be a massacre. Jim sat on the edge of his chair, in case Ladd might need a little help from a friend.

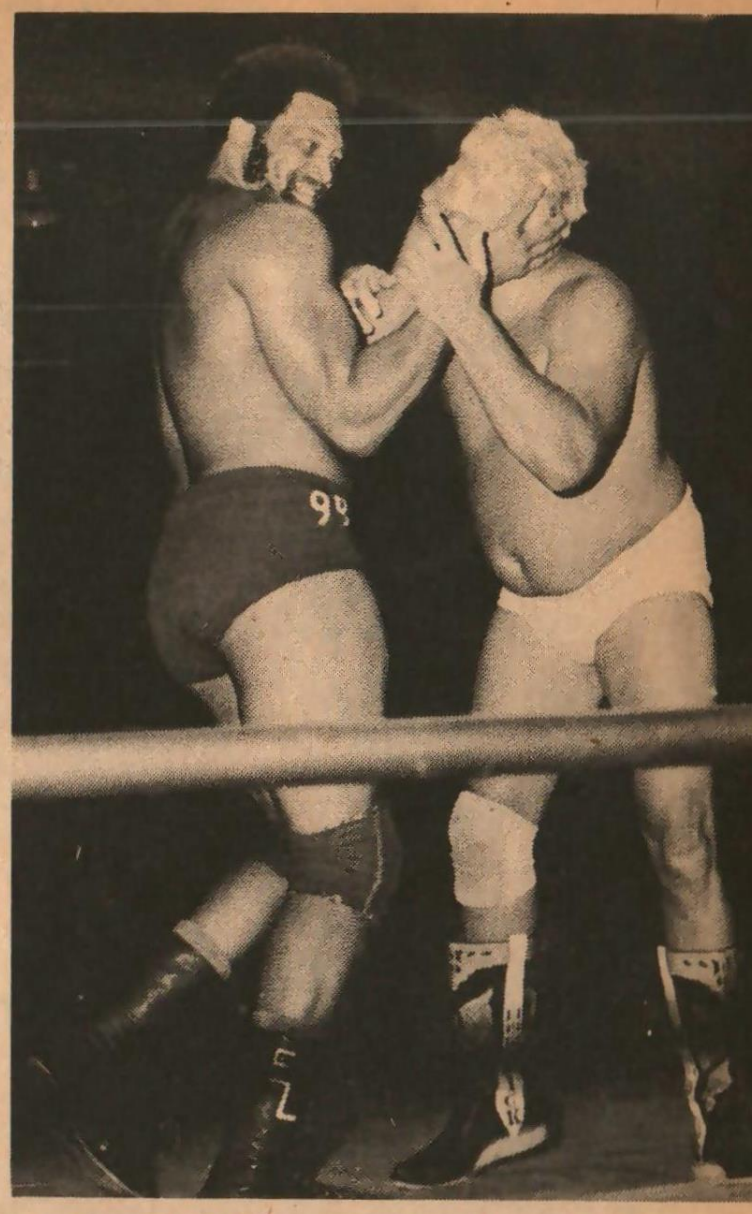
Meanwhile, back in the dressing room, Murdoch prepared to meet Ladd. Dick had long ago lost count of how many had tried to cripple him and drive him from the sport he loves. Of course he knew Ladd's reputation and had seen him many times.

"Ernie is capable of collecting," Dick told friends, "but so was every other louse who tried for the bounty. This is just another match as far as I'm concerned. Ladd may be a great wrestler, but I've got to believe I'm better than he is. Dillon won't be $10,000 poorer after tonight."

As each man strode purposefully

(Continued on page 56)

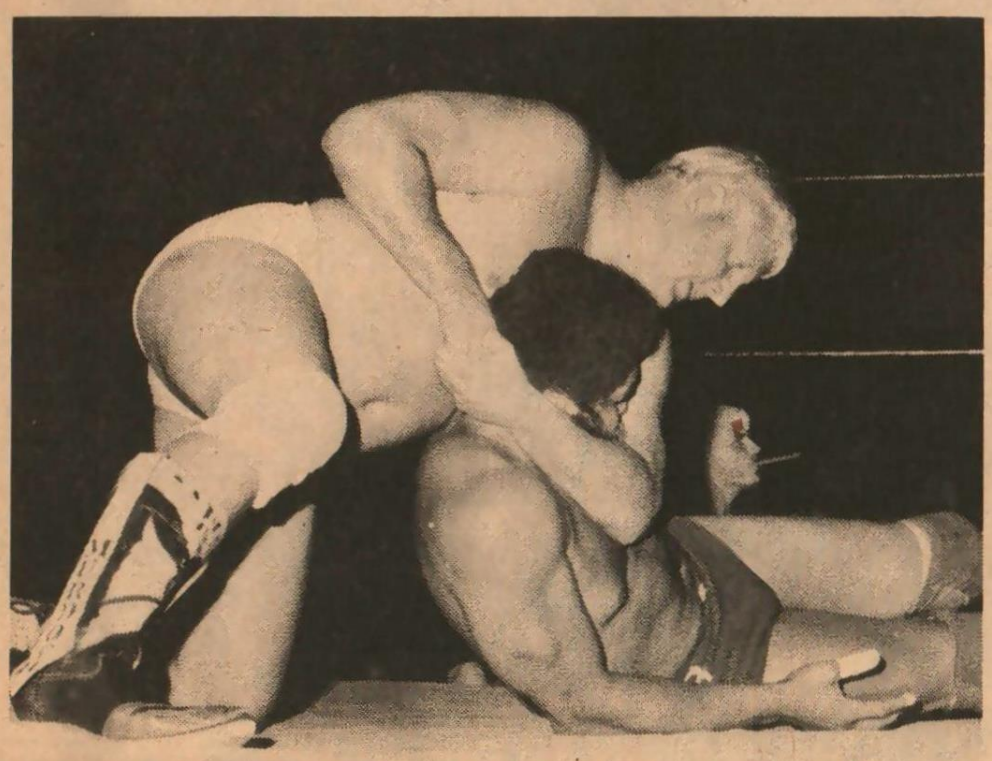




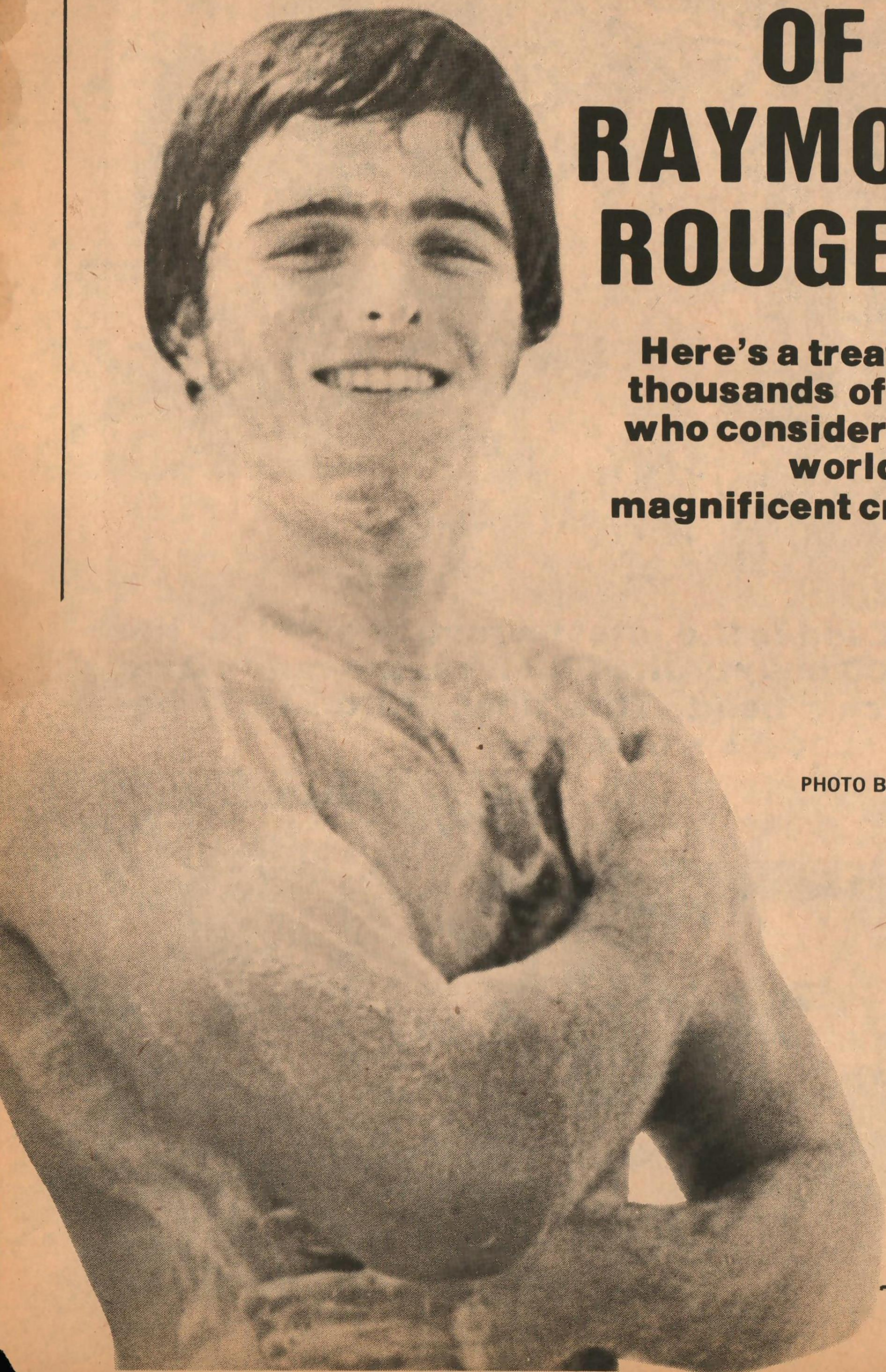
Ernie Ladd demonstrates his ability to gouge an opponent's eye (above). When Ernie is in trouble, Jim Dillon is there with a folding chair (left).

Ernie Ladd is the latest wrestler to try for the $10,000 bounty Jim Dillon has placed on Dick Murdoch's head. This time, Dillon truly believed success would be his

Dick decks Ladd with a flying elbow smash (right) and a weakened Ladd crumples to the canvas. Then Dick leaps on the fallen wrestler and clamps him in a headlock (below). Ladd is in agony from the hold!



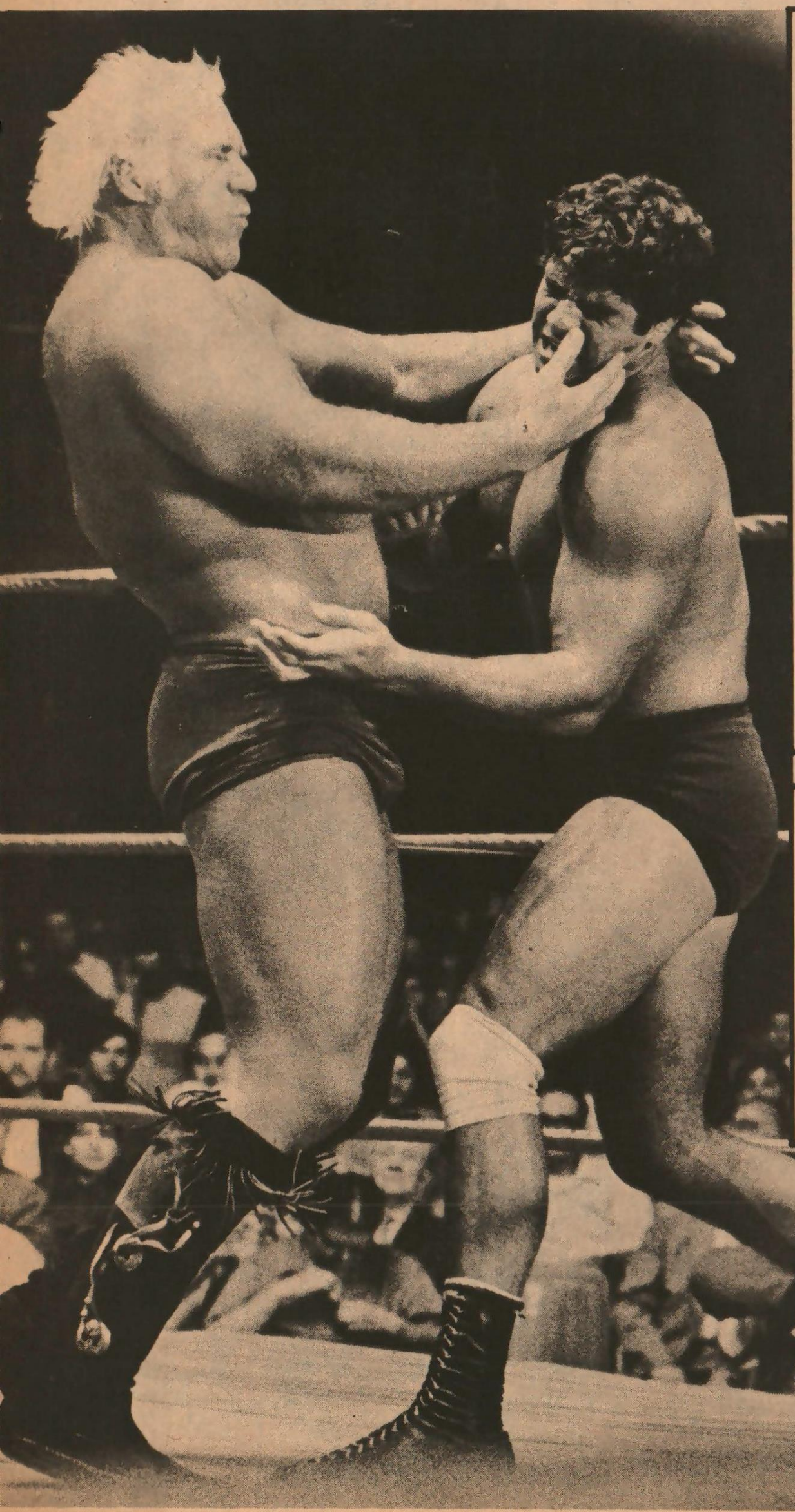
A "DIFFERENT" VIEW OF RAYMOND ROUGEAU

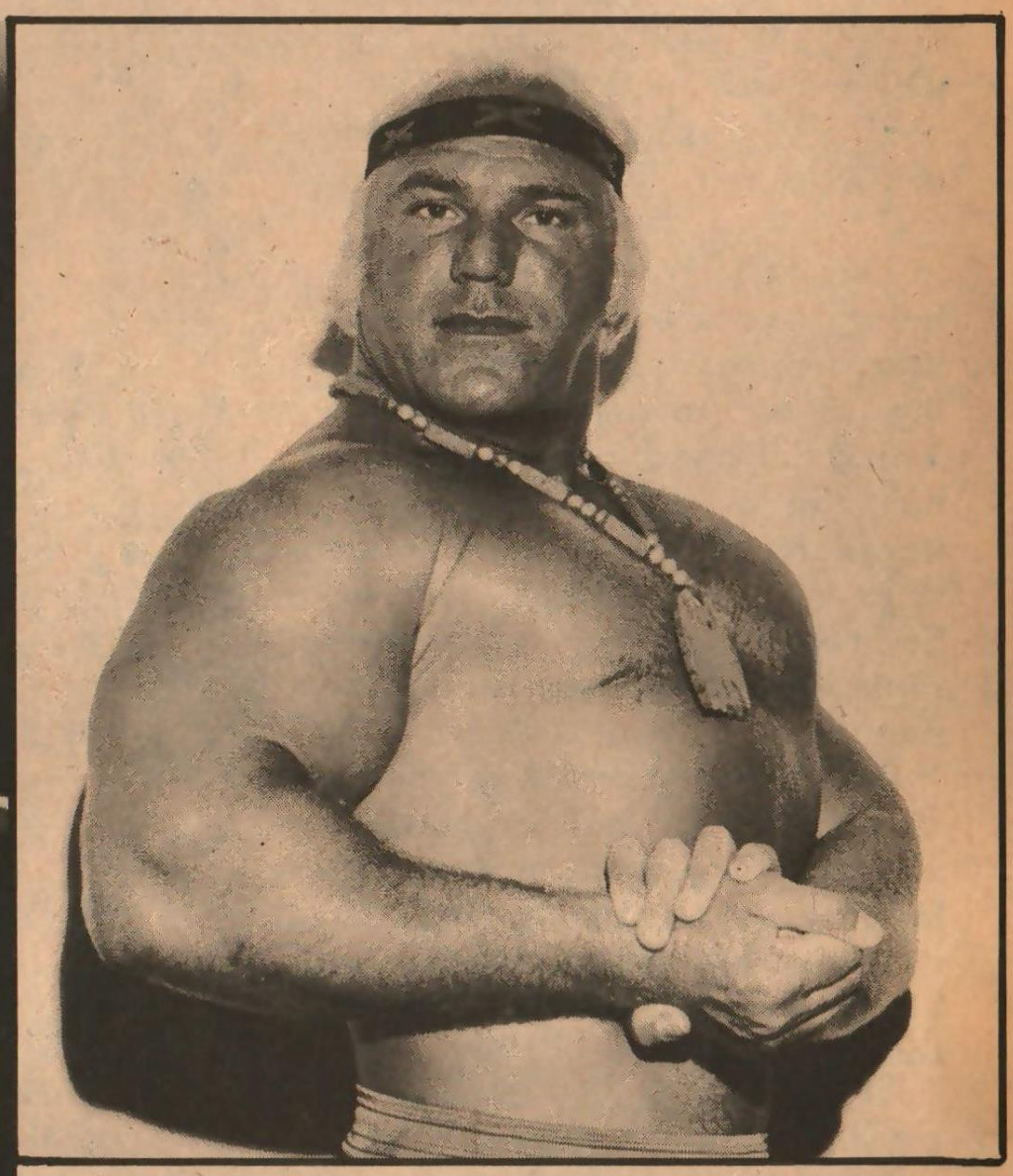


Here's a treat for the thousands of women who consider Ray the world's most magnificent creature.

PHOTO BY TONY LANZA

THIS BILLY GRAHAM PREACHES VIOLENCE!





The newest Graham brother has a startling effect on people when they hear his name and then watch him in action. He fits the pattern of the original Graham brothers, but yet, there is something strange about him. Here's why . . .

(Continued)

AND IN THIS corner, from Phoenix, Arizona, weighing 282 pounds, Billy Graham!"

There is a mixture of ohoos and ahs from the crowd as the ring announcer's voice booms through the arena. Then somebody yells jokingly, "Hey, Billy, where's your bible?"

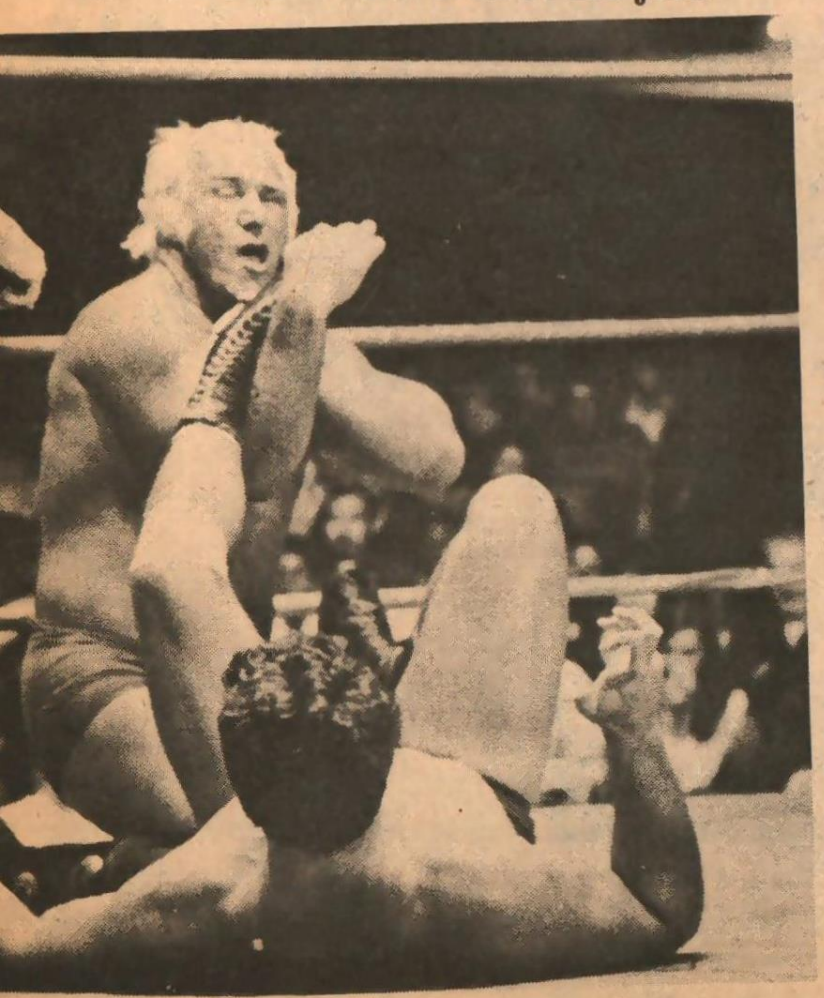
Billy growls in the direction of the jokster, "I ain't no preacher!"

This Billy Graham is far from being a preacher. He's a tough, powerhouse who makes his living as a professional wrestler. You'd think with a name like that he'd be a strictly by-the-book wrestler. He's not. He breaks rules as often and as easily as he breaks arms and legs. Nobody fools around with this Billy Graham and gets away with it!

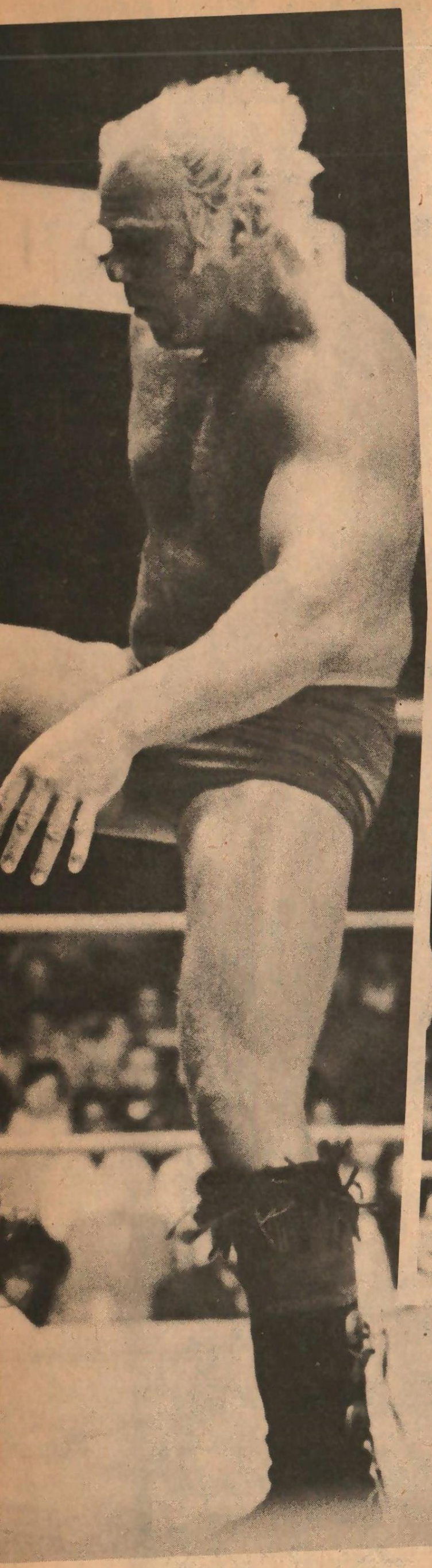
Billy is the youngest of the famous Graham brothers. He is also the biggest, strongest, best-looking and best built of the clan. Billy is one helluva man, but he has great respect for his brothers.

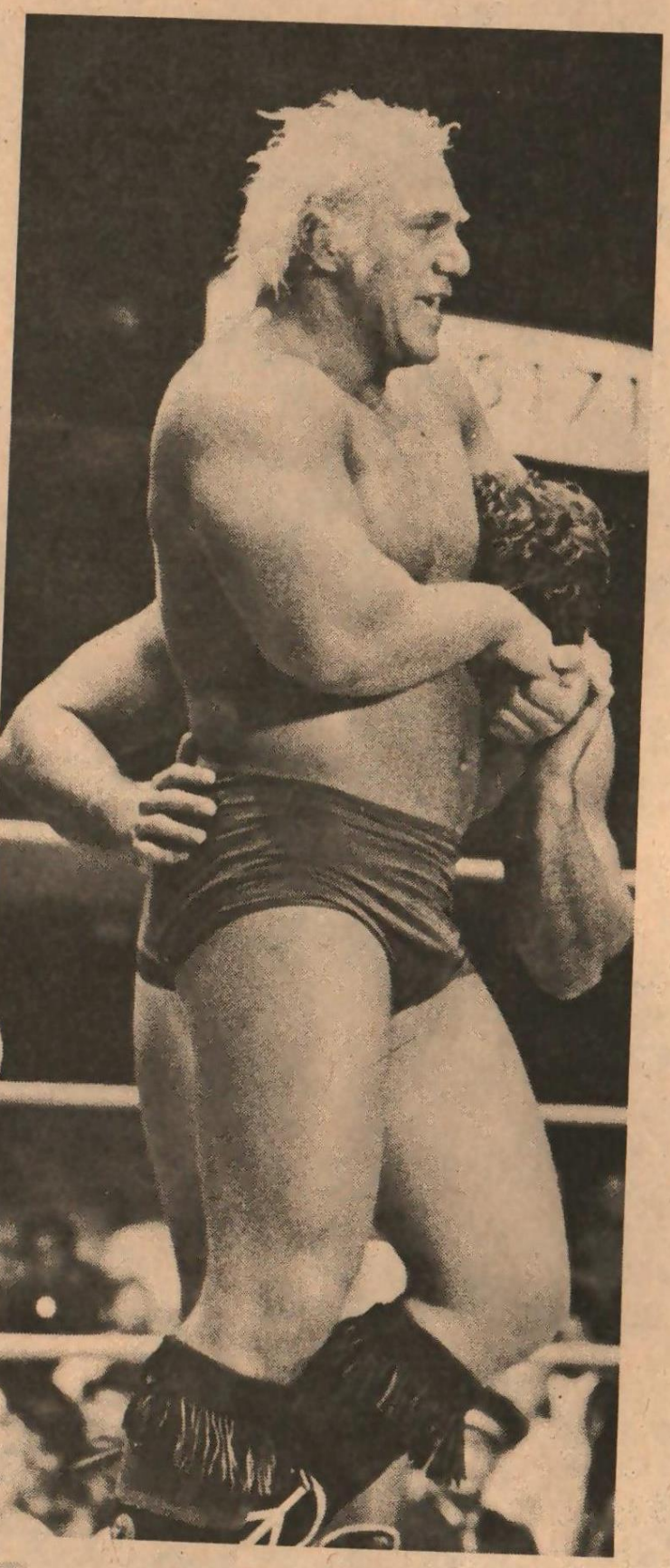
"They taught me everything I know about wrestling," Billy admits. "Jerry, my oldest brother, has been my idol as long as I can remember. And it gripes the hell out of me when some jerk

Wearing specially-made ring robe, in which an American flag was used for section around the waist and sleeve cuffs, Billy strikes defying pose before leaving dressing room for the ring.



Left: Graham lays all his strength behind toehold which he has on popular Don Morrow. Soon after picture was taken, Morrow broke free, but as soon as he tried to pick himself off the floor, Billy stomped him on the back of his neck (right).





Graham growls insults at jeering crowd as he drags Morrow around the ring with skull-crushing headlock. At one point, to upset the crowd still further, Billy allowed Morrow to break free, then immediately clamped him in another crushing headlock.

gets on his back and starts calling him 'fat.' Any of those brave loudmouths who think Jerry is fat and out of shape should get into the ring with him. I guarantee they won't walk away. They'd be carried away!"

Billy turned down several movie offers to play strongman roles, like former Mr. America Steve Reeves did. "The money was great," Billy recalls, "but I'm not an actor. I play for real. I live, man. I live!"

Billy has won his share of muscleman titles. "I was 'Junior Mr. America' and 'Mr. Arizona,' " he says.

He can bench press 600 pounds and his great arms measure 22 inches. "I have a touch time keeping my weight under 300 pounds," he says with a pained look on his face. "I can't eat the things I like to eat. But," he added with a grin, "wheat germ and honey don't taste bad when you get used to it."

Being taught to wrestle by a notorious villain like Jerry Graham couldn't have turned Billy into anything else but what he is—an angry, roaring, young wildman.

"I realize I have a lot of strength

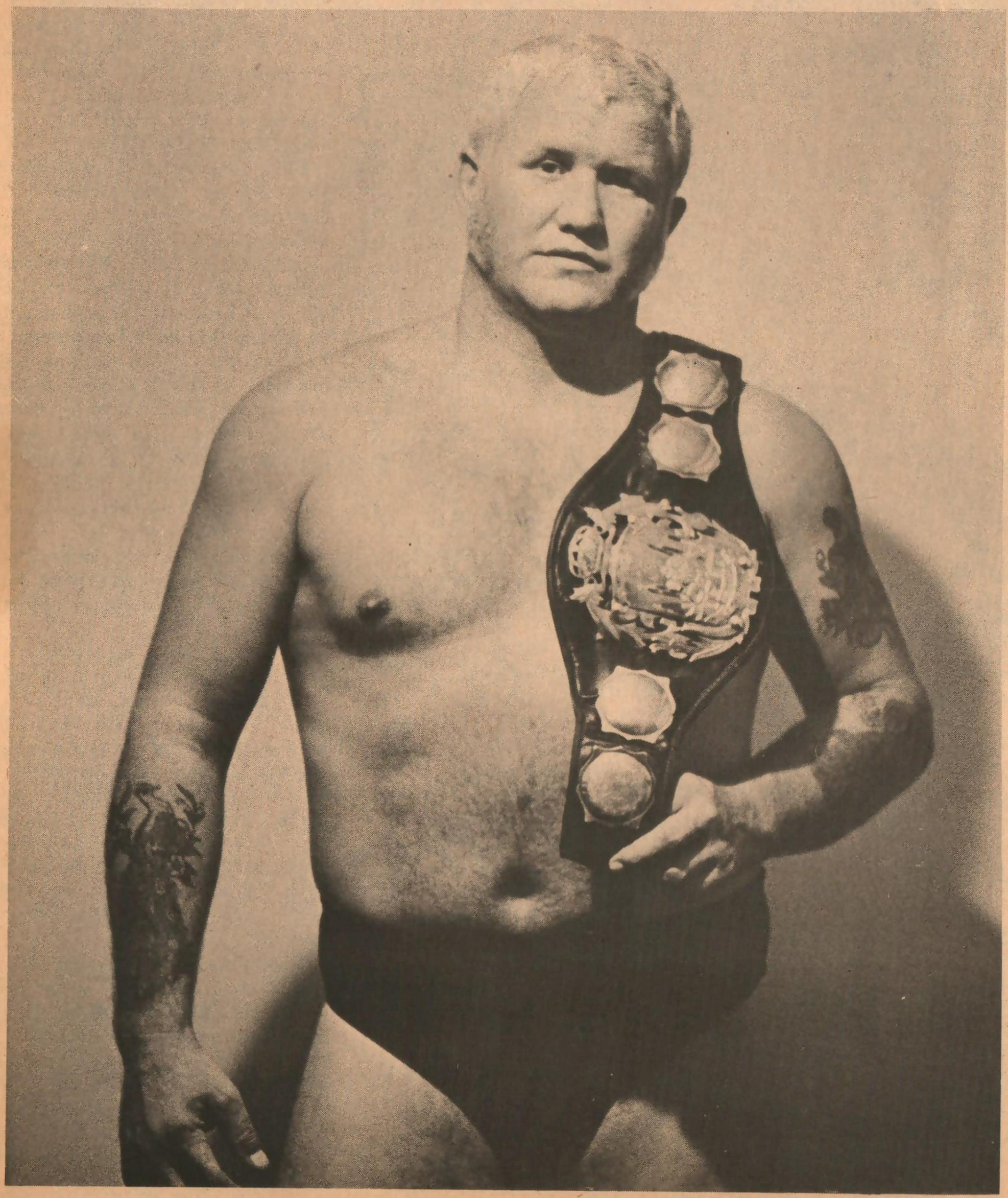
"I realize I have a lot of strength," Billy says matter-of-factly, **"and that it wouldn't be hard for me to bust a guy's back or yank his arm out of its socket. People don't realize how dangerous this wrestling business is. I played pro football with the Houston Oilers, so I should know what I'm talking about when I say wrestling is a lot rougher than football."**

The 6-foot 4-inch Graham has had little experience wrestling as a single, and if he had his way, he'd never get into the ring without a partner, preferably brother Jerry.

"I dig tag matches," Billy says. "I suppose the reason for it is because I was brought up in team

(Continued on page 58)

DID THEY WRIT
OFF TOO SOON?



E HARLEY RACE

The day Jack Brisco won the N.W.A. heavyweight championship, Harley Race, the man from whom Brisco won it, became a forgotten man. In this exclusive interview, Race speaks out on what it was like during that horrible time after he lost the title

When Harley won the N.W.A. belt from Dory Funk Jr. in 1973 after a brutal battle (above), many wrestling observers said his victory was an accident of fate. When Race lost the belt to Jack Brisco two months later in another classic brawl (left), those skeptical of Race's talent had a field day questioning Harley's ability.

IT WAS A happy Harley Race who stood beaming in his dressing room, the Missouri state heavyweight championship belt snugly around his waist. Race had just completed another successful defense of the belt he'd won from Dory Funk Jr. awhile back, and he was in a talkative mood. After a shower, he agreed to an exclusive interview over a steak dinner.

"Yeah, I've been holding back a lot of things since I lost the title," Harley candidly admitted. "A lot of things were said by a lot of people, people I thought were my friends, and I didn't want to say anything about 'em at the time.

"You know what they said. They said I was the 'accidental' champion. They said my victory over Dory Funk Jr. was a 'fluke.' They said that when Brisco beat me so quickly after I won the title it *proved* I wasn't championship material.

"And let me tell you, those things *hurt*. They hurt a lot. I had attained something every wrestler dreams about—the N.W.A. belt—and all I heard were wisecracks about how I didn't deserve it. Just think. There are hundreds of thousands of professional wrestlers in the world. Only a handful ever get or will get to wear that belt. I was one of them. And from the criticism I received, you'd think I shoulda apologized for winning the belt.

"That's why I never said anything until I whipped Funk for the Missouri belt. Now *nobody* can say the first time was a *fluke*. I beat the man who was world champion for over four years and I beat him twice and both times a title changed hands. You tell me. Does that sound like I'm a 'fluke' champion?

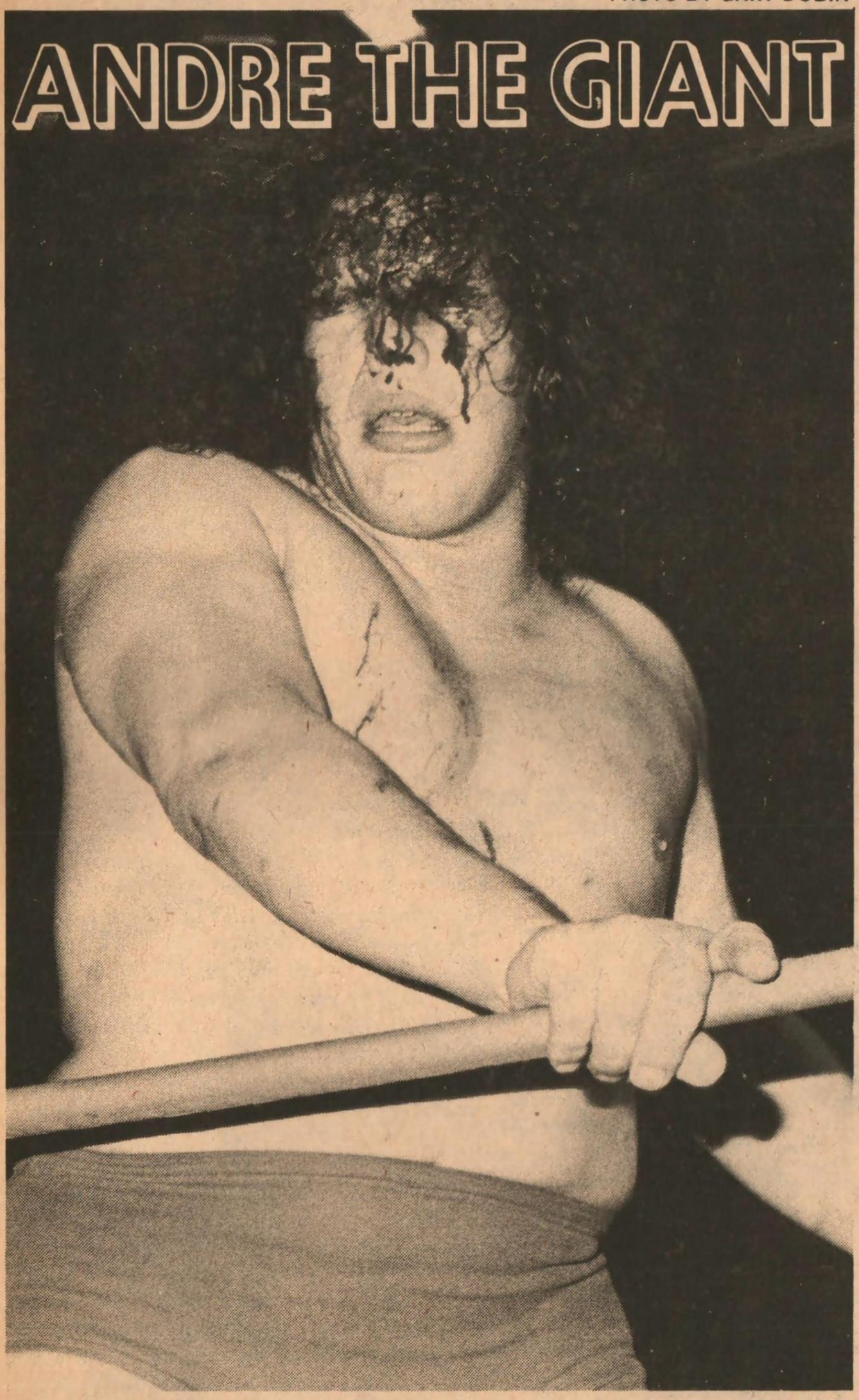
From the tone of his voice it wasn't hard to notice that Race was deeply hurt—and bitter—about the situation.

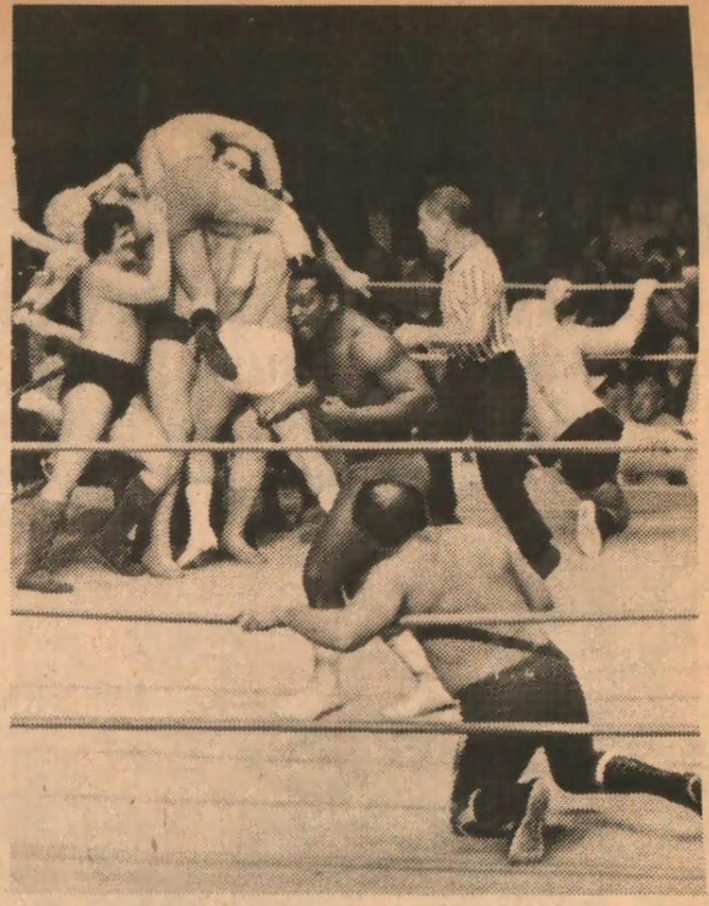
(Continued on page 64)

FOR $20,000 IN PRIZE MONEY...

PHOTO BY GARY DUBIN

ANDRE THE GIANT





Above: Wrestlers run from all over to leap atop Andre early in the match. Left: A bloody Andre stares after a retreating John Tolos. Below: The bell rings and the wild bout begins.

ONCE A YEAR, the world's greatest wrestlers converge on Los Angeles for its greatest grappling event, the Battle Royal. For the winner there is $20,000 and glory. For the many losers, there is the dream of next year.

WHIPS 20 MEN A

Some of the world's greatest wrestlers met in the attempt to win a small fortune. Here is the story of this year's Los Angeles Battle Royal.

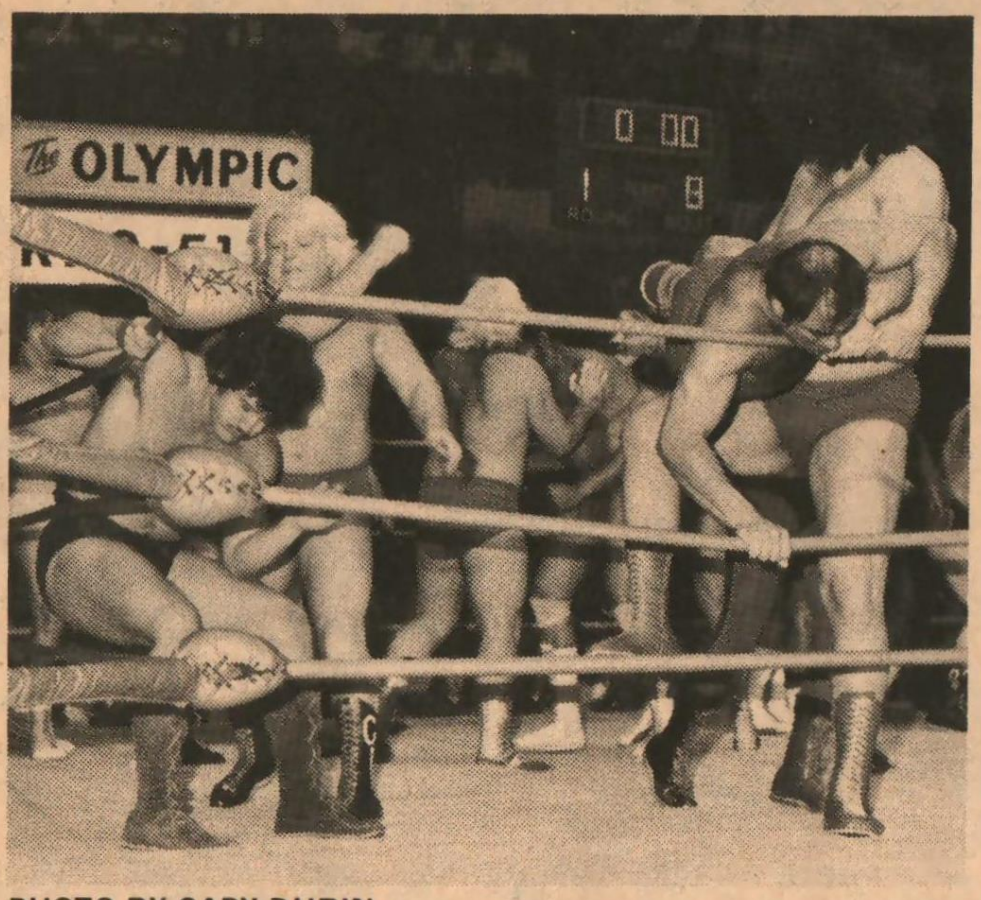


PHOTO BY GARY DUBIN

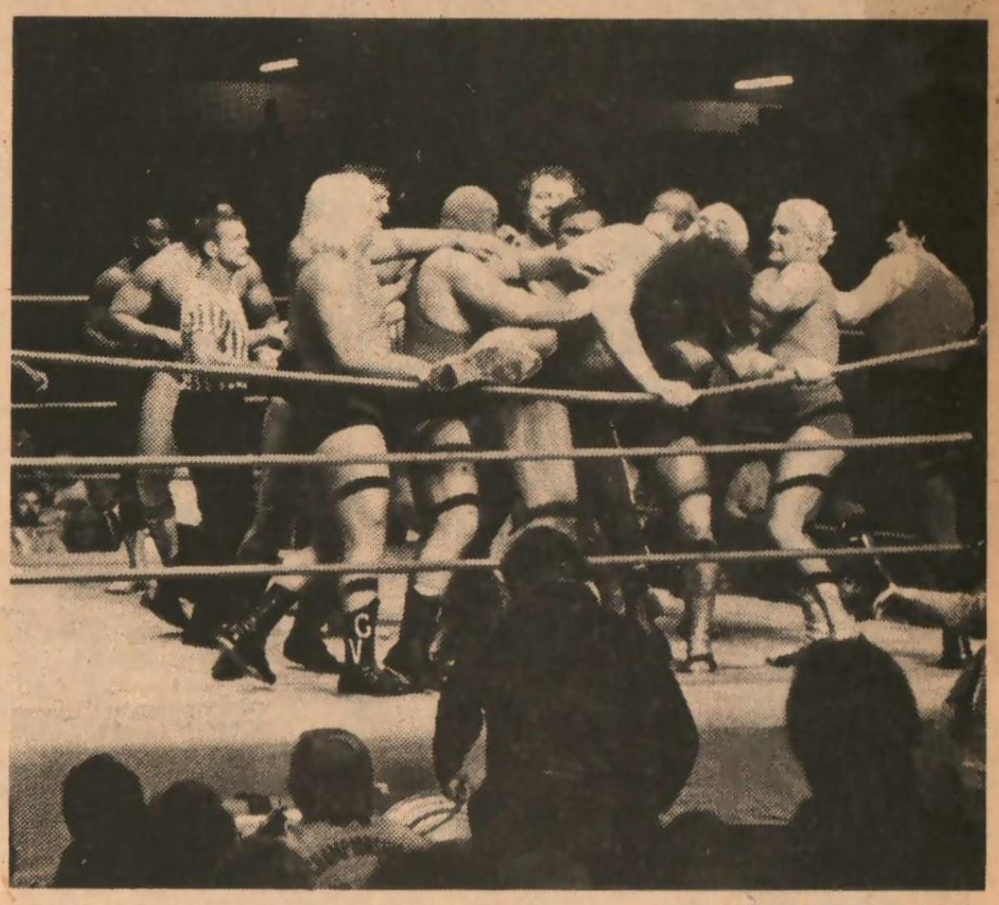


PHOTO BY GARY DUBIN

The action is raging when Andre tries to hurl Tolos over the ropes (above left). However, the other wrestlers then go after the giant, making Andre struggle for his battle royal life (above right). He is forced to straddle the ropes before being able to push his way back into the fray (below). This is Andre's closest call of the bout.

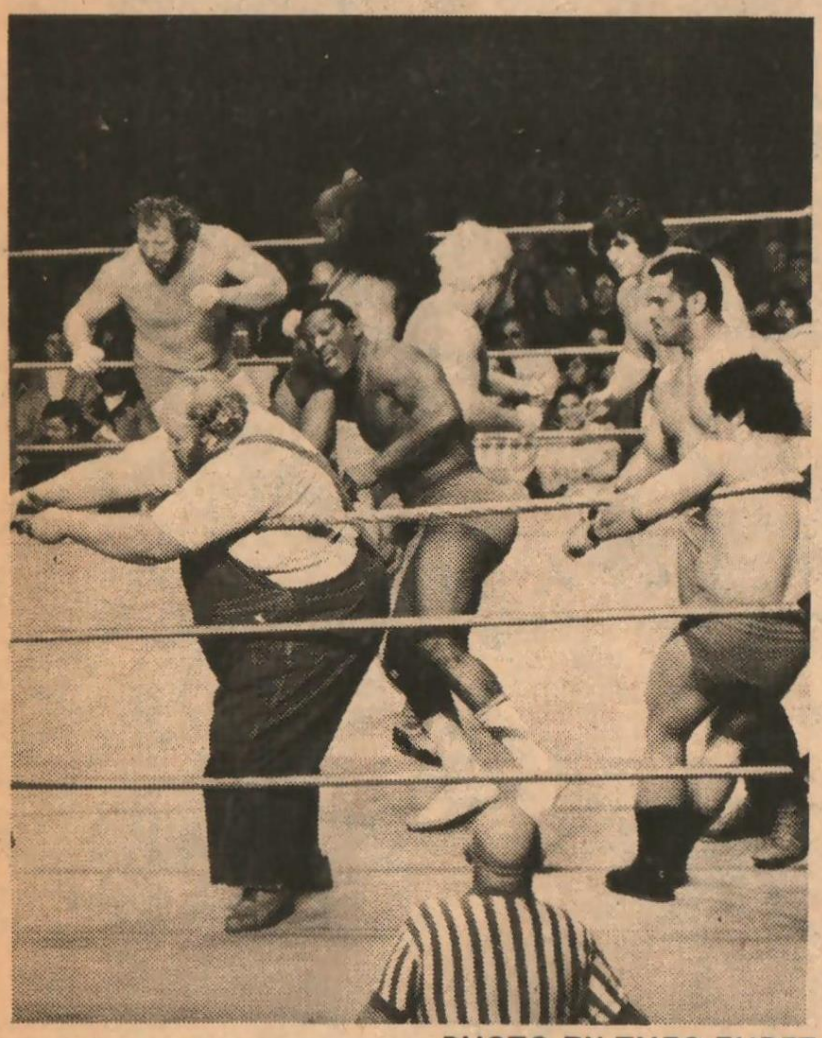


PHOTO BY THEO EHRET

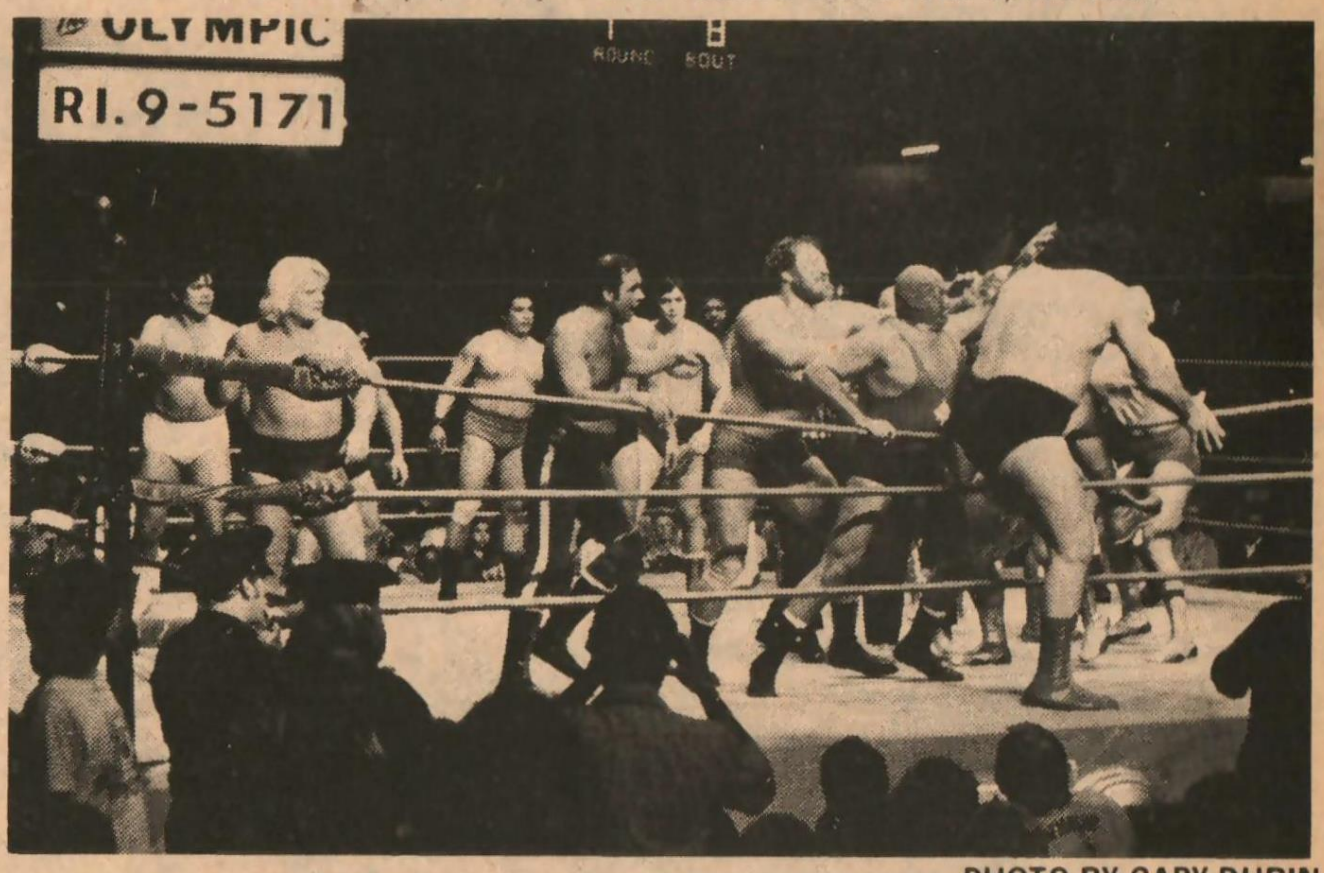


PHOTO BY GARY DUBIN

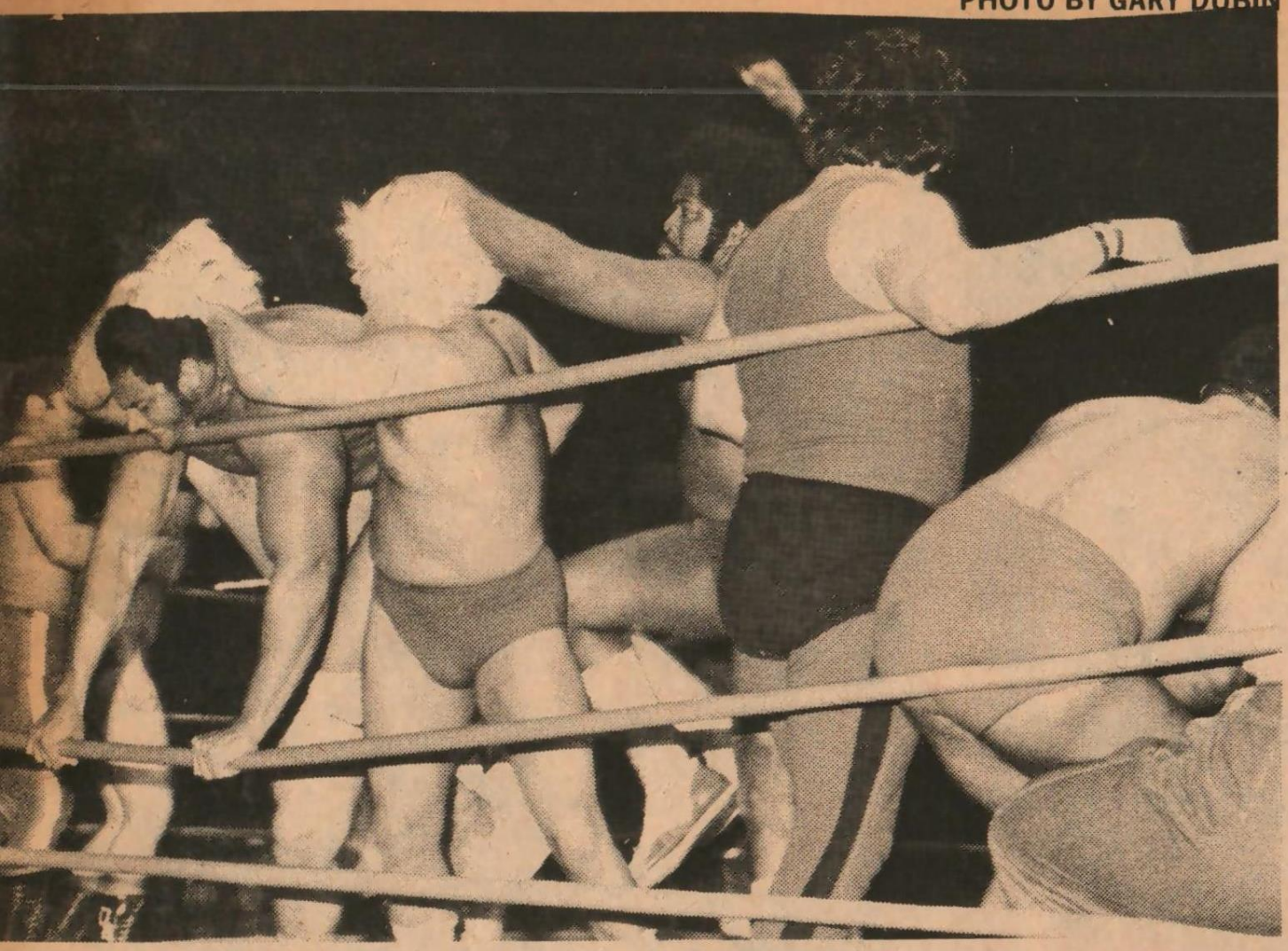
It is an event wrestlers talk about all year long. All who can possibly schedule themselves to be available for the match enter it. It's not the money that makes it so exciting, though none would care to forfeit the purse. The real reason so many go through such trouble to be there is the thrill of wrestling the most accomplished, dangerous colleagues.

"You can see it in their eyes," says referee Johnny "Red Shoes" Dugan. "To a man they're like little kids let loose in a candy store. They bounce around, doing whatever they feel like. And for $20,000, there's a lot they feel like doing.

"They enjoy the excitement of momentary alliances and unexpected betrayals. A guy becomes a wrestler because at bottom he trusts only

LL IN ONE NIGHT!

PHOTO BY GARY DUBIN



Mighty Zulu clings to the ropes as the Hollywood Blonds attempt to throw him over and out (above). Porkchop Cash lends a helping hand and the Blonds fail in their attempt to eliminate their victim!

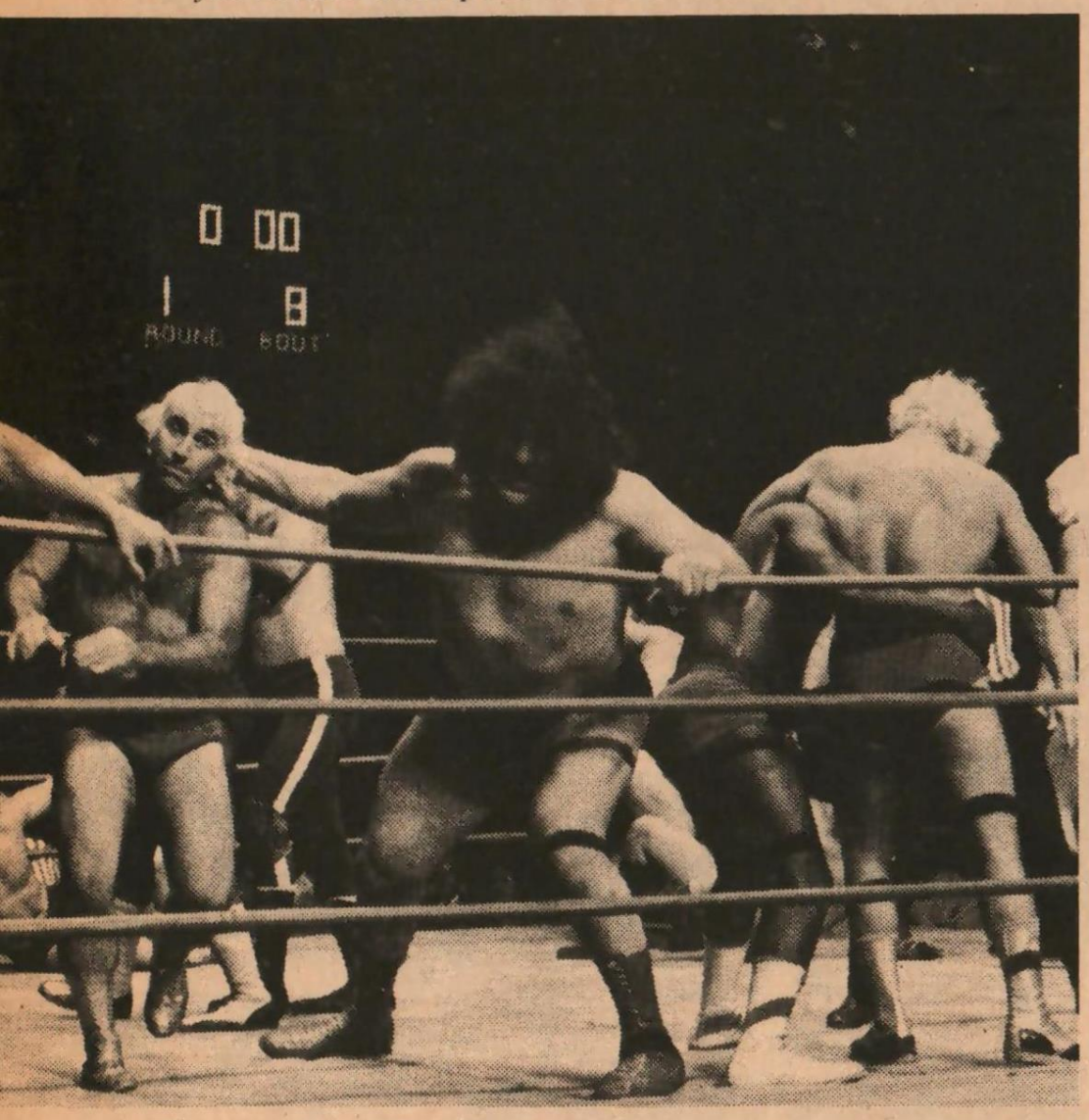


PHOTO BY GARY DUBIN

PHOTO BY GARY DUBIN

Above: Pat Patterson holds back Victor Rivera, who is trying to twist Man Mountain Mike over the rope and out. Gordman is coming to free the behemoth.

Above: Pampero Firpo gets help but still can't get John Tolos over the rope and onto the arena floor. Left: A Hollywood Blond is dragged to the ropes by his famous hair by Andre. The giant grappler was a methodical whirlwind as he raged during the bout!

himself. Where else is each man so alone with everyone against him? A battle royal is the perfect place for a wrestler to be. I'd bet my house those guys would do it for nothing."

Would Dugan referee for nothing?

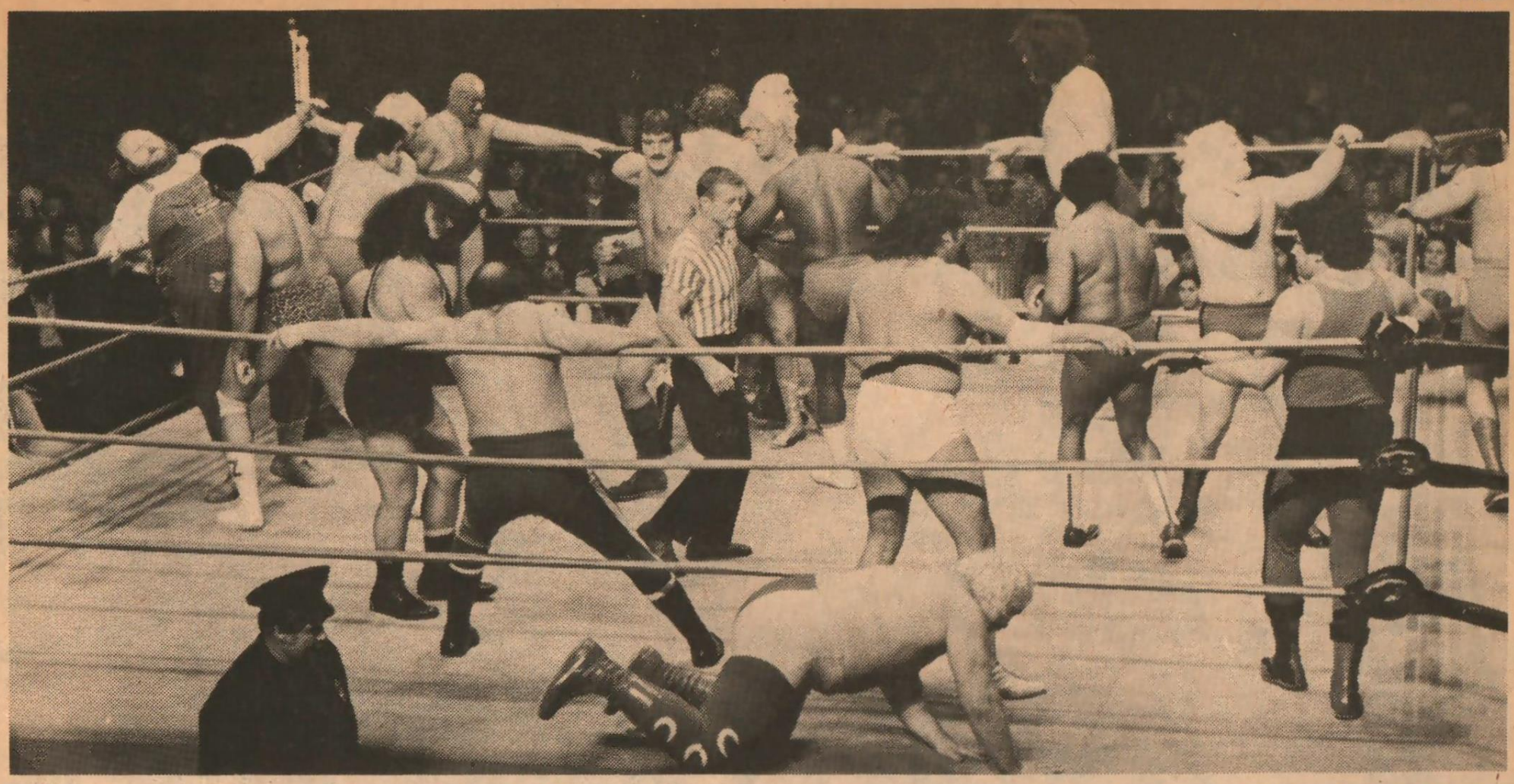
"I should get twice as much as they pay me!" Dugan says emphatically, but with a smile. "Those guys are wild in there! Even if it is a free-for-all, some order has to be maintained. Being a referee for a battle royal is like getting caught in a street brawl without being allowed to defend yourself! But someone's got to do it and it's my job. It's an event no referee looks forward to, though."

The referees may not like it, but the wrestlers love battle royals. It's one of the few things Victor Rivera and John Tolos have in common.

In the past, these two bitter enemies have even teamed up momentarily to remove another opponent. Such astounding alliances are commonplace in these matches where everything is unpredictable.

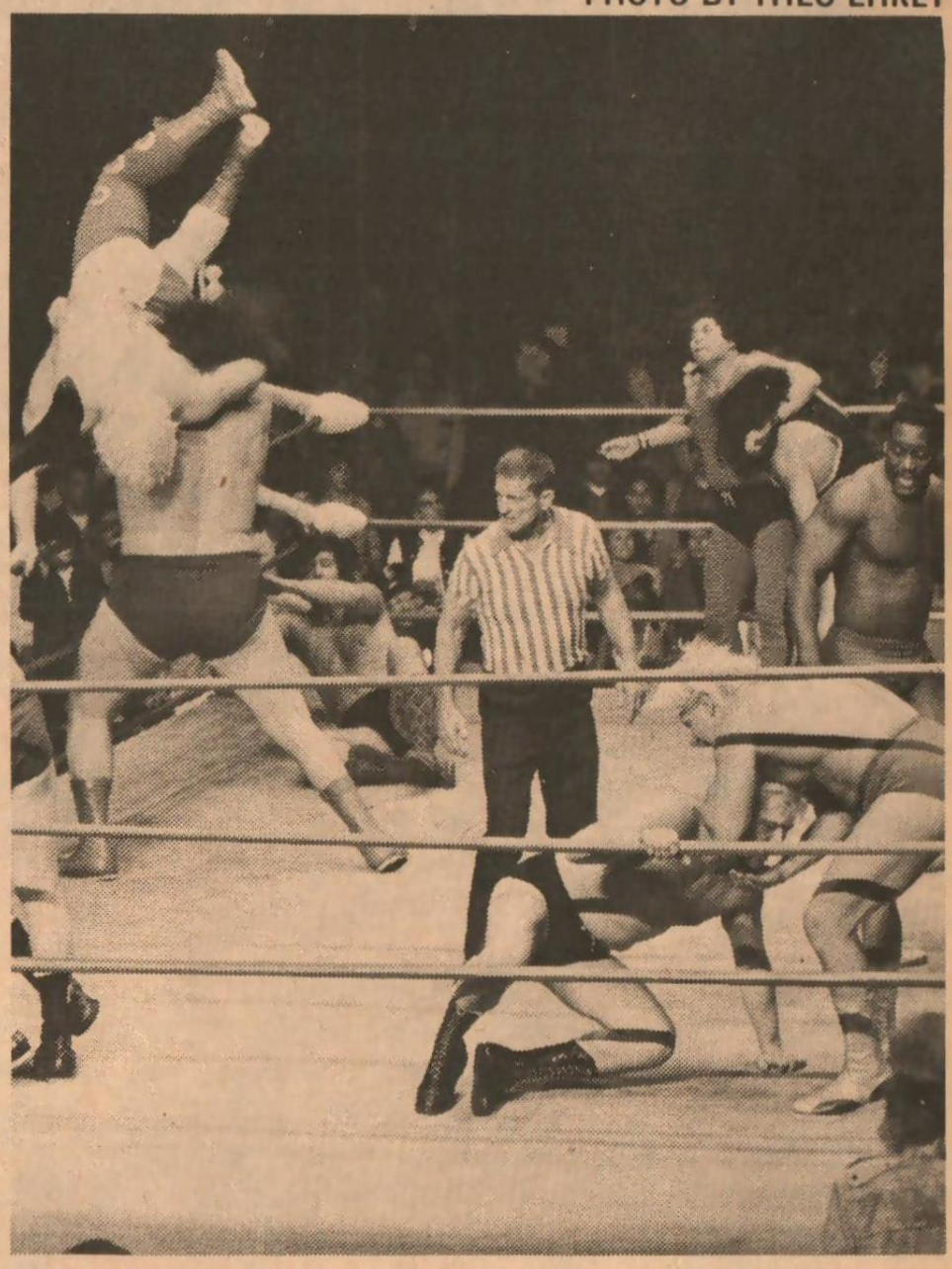
The most recent battle royal proved even more exciting and astonishing than the previous year's. There were so many huge wrestlers it became difficult to see even Andre the Giant in the crowd! The list of grapplers who

PHOTO BY THEO EHRET



Above: Moondog Mayne crawls back after going over the ropes but landing on the apron, which allows him to return early in the match. Right: The crowd is thinned and getting thinner. Wrestlers are thrown over the ropes and pounded into submission. Below: The struggle intensifies later in the match as they get closer to the prize. Notice there is a referee inside the ring and one outside to maintain order.

PHOTO BY THEO EHRET



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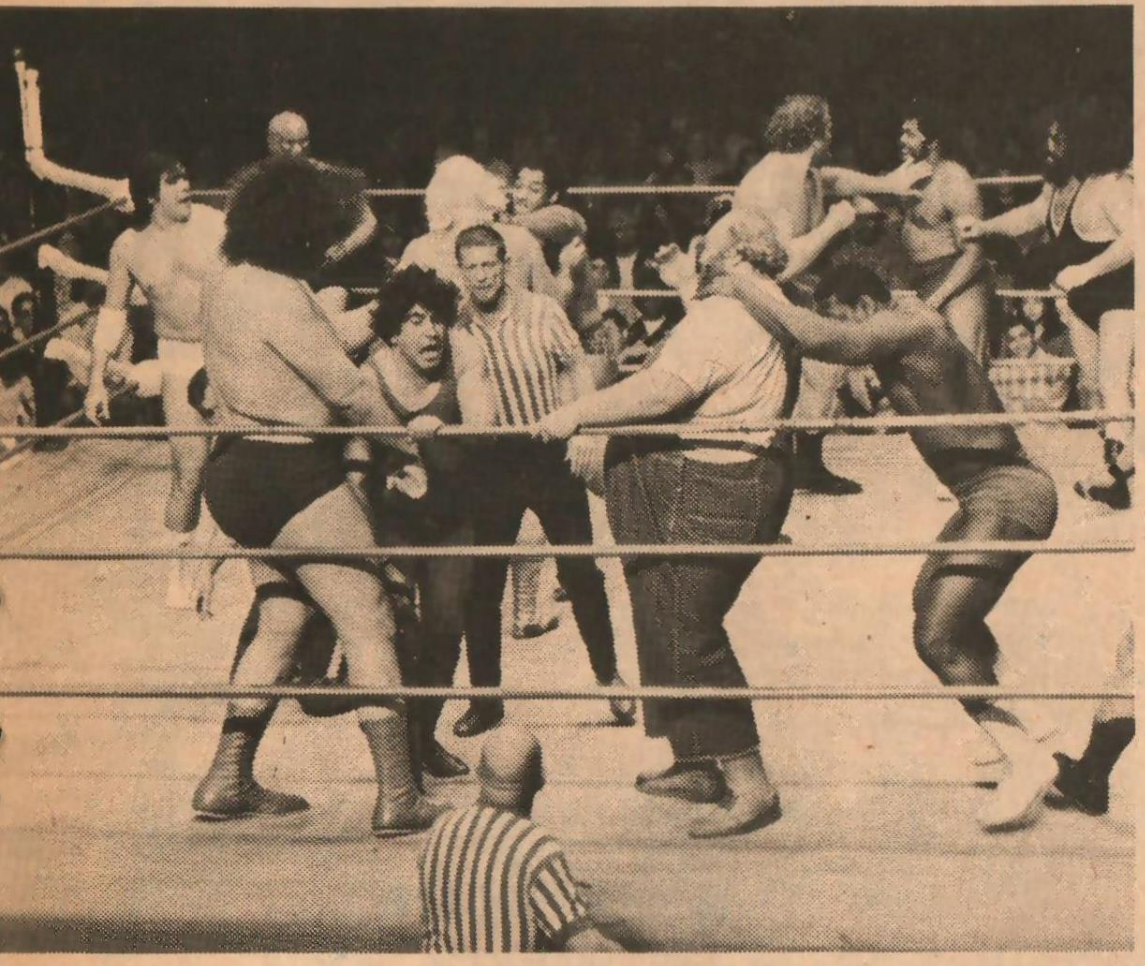


appeared would fill a large chapter in the book of wrestling history.

When the bell sounded to begin the match, the crowded ring exploded in wrestling fury. Men threw themselves at each other in unusual daring for so early in a match. The first victims would be eliminated by sheer force and bad luck.

Some were overpowered, some were brutalized too badly to continue. Slowly, the battlefield thinned as wrestler after wrestler went hurtling over the ropes to the cement floor.

The new ruling which allowed wrestlers to return to action if they landed on the apron instead of the floor saved many, but only momentarily. Battered and bruised, the grapplers trudged back to the dressing room to dream of victory next year.

Black Gordman, last year's winner, discovered lightning rarely strikes twice. The look of outrage on his face when he was tossed out revealed what it feels like to go from champion to ex-champion.

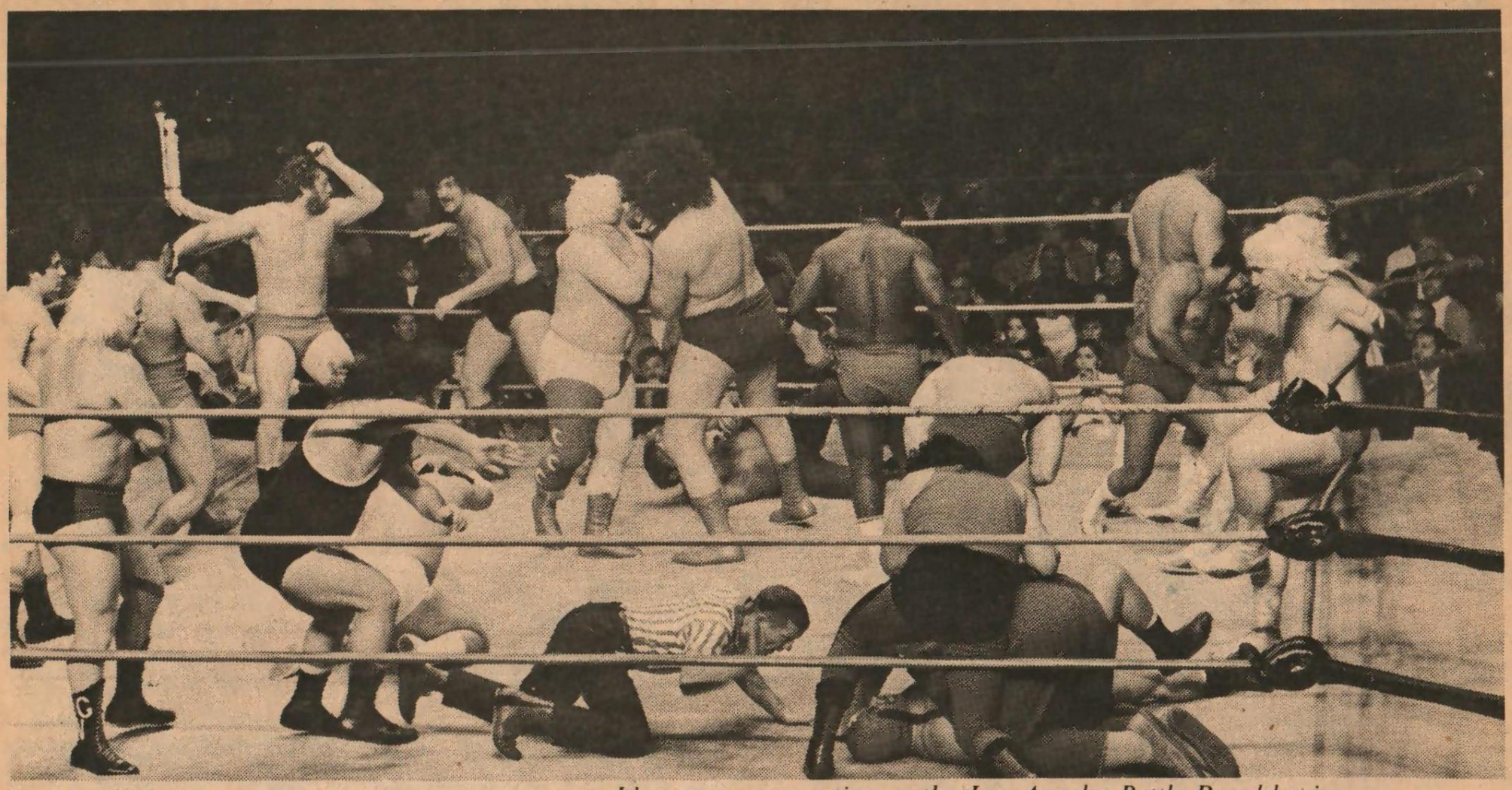
"You can't keep me out!" Gordman screamed. He tried to get back into the battle. "I've got to win two years in a row!"

"Start next year on number one,"

Continued

ANDRE THE GIANT

PHOTO BY THEO EHRET



It's rope to rope action as the Los Angeles Battle Royal begins. At this point, every man in this ring believes he can win the $20,000 (above). Yet each man is well aware that only one of them will walk away with the small fortune for which they're battling.

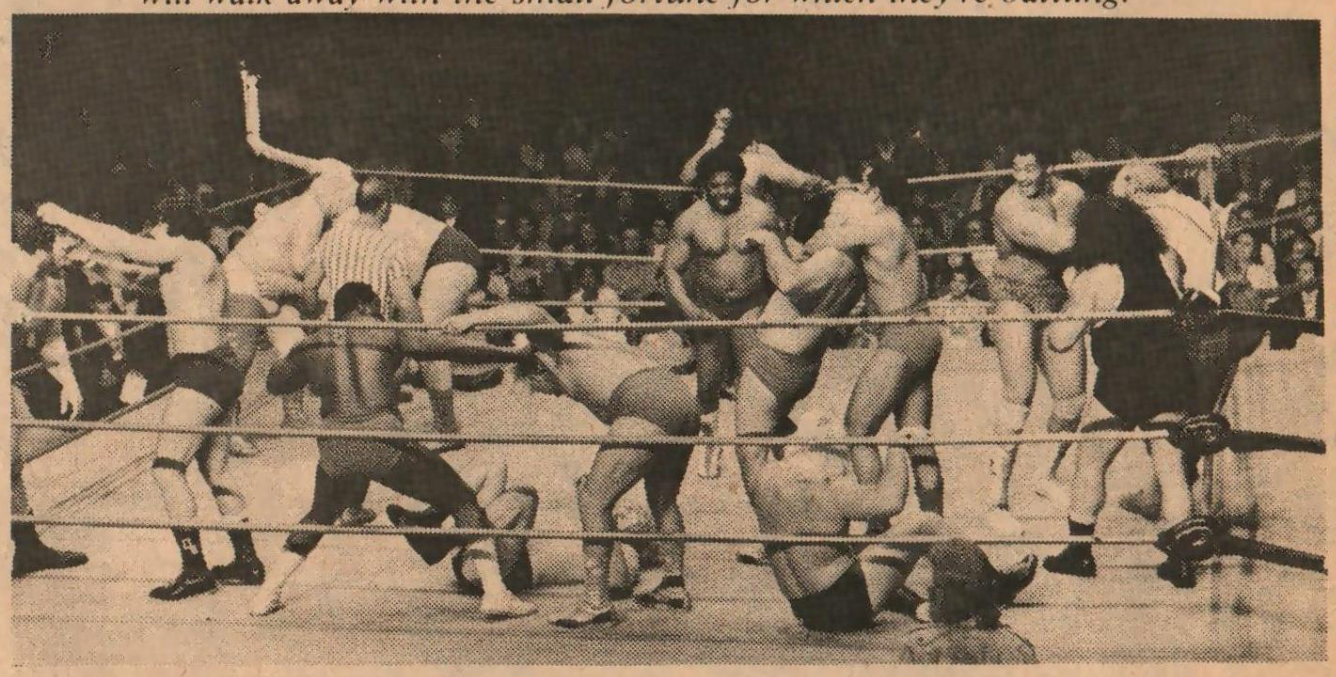


PHOTO BY THEO EHRET

Some wrestlers compare being in a battle royal to a ball in a pinball machine, bouncing off other wrestlers almost without a will of your own. In the Los Angeles Battle Royal (above and below), one understands exactly why some wrestlers think this way!

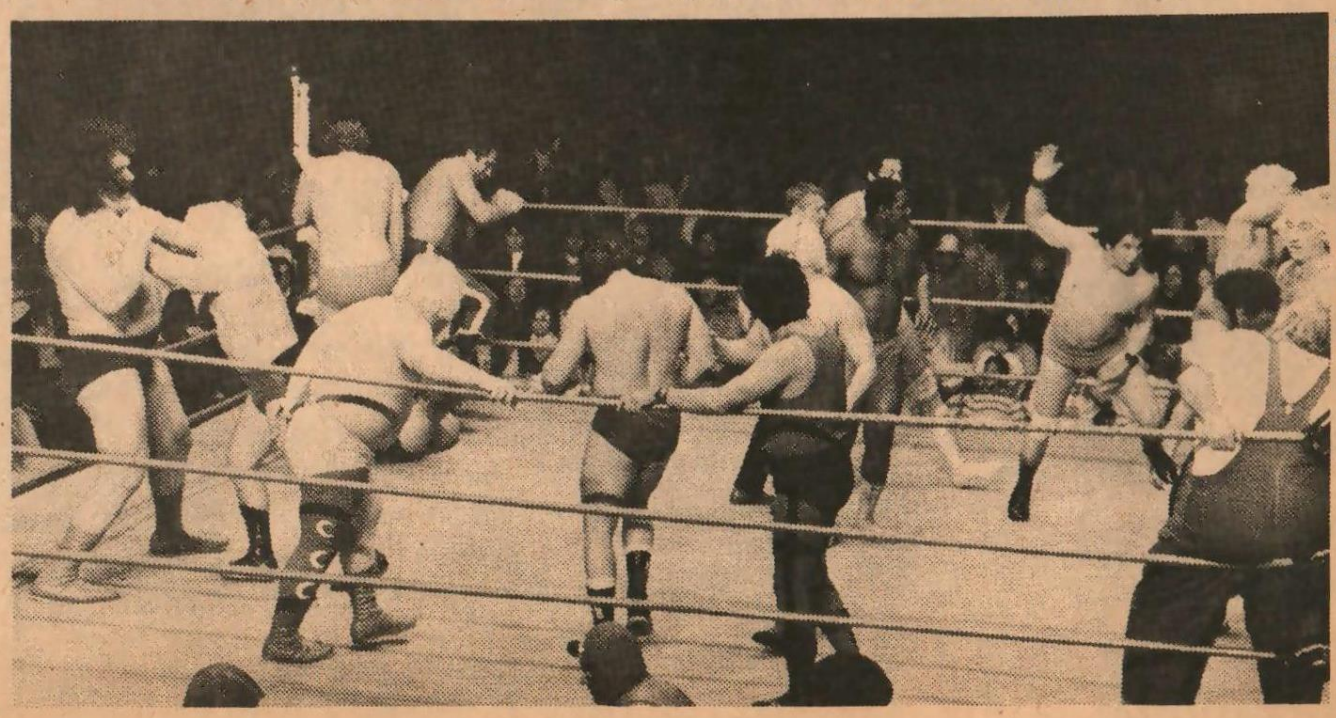


PHOTO BY THEO EHRET

referee Dugan said. He then added, "If you're not back in the dressing room in 15 seconds, you're fined $500!"

Gordman turned and headed back, a walk which last year had been full of jubilation.

Yet few saw his exit. They were transfixed by the still astounding action. Victor Rivera, Andre the Giant, John Tolos, and Mighty Zulu were the last men remaining. The $20,000 prize was almost close enough to spend. Already, the quartet had beaten the odds by lasting this long. Each man believed this would be his year.

Victor became the first to have his dream shattered. As Rivera fell to the cement floor, John Tolos let out a scream of victory. Outlasting his hated enemy is always a thrill for the "Golden Greek."

Hearing Tolos yowls of pleasure, Rivera looked back, his face twisted in an ugly snarl. Soon Victor would be smiling. Tolos would quickly follow, though much blood would be lost in the meantime.

For such a fortune, Tolos had come prepared to do anything necessary to win. Grabbing a plastic knife, John started swinging away, trying to do as much damage as possible in the shortest time!

Within seconds blood poured down Andre's face. Then Tolos jabbed the knife into the small of Zulu's back. The victim's body arced as if hit by electricity. Crumpling to the canvas, Zulu seemed doomed.

But an enraged Andre refused to

PHOTO BY THEO EHRET

Above: Almost immediately, pockets of congestion form as wrestlers topple on top of each other in the crowded ring. Below: Pileups begin in two corners as grappler after grappler leaps on the pile of ever-growing human bodies, a common tactic in battle royals.

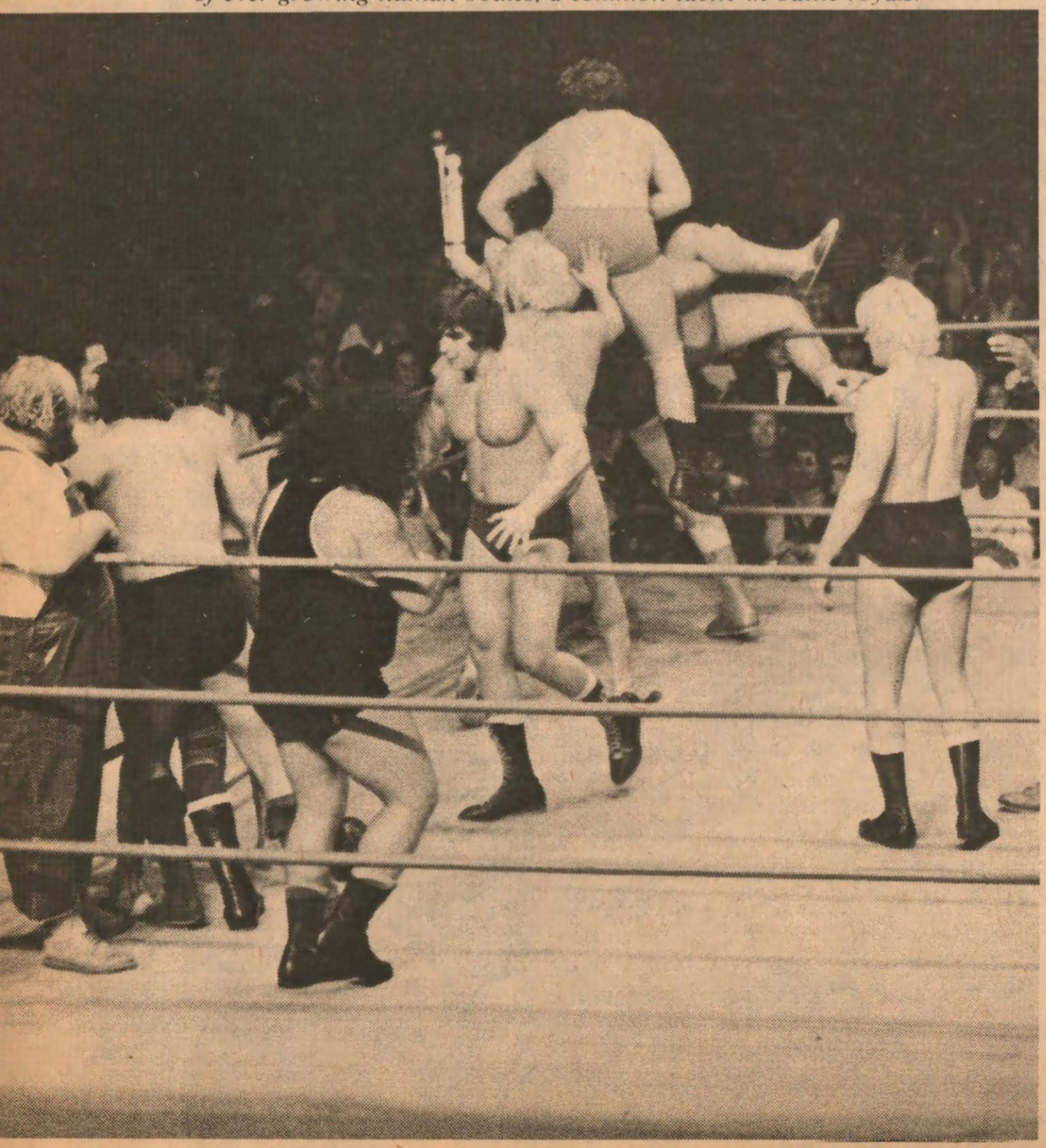


PHOTO BY THEO EHRET

allow Tolos to win. His face still a bloody mask, the Giant grabbed Tolos and hurled the wrestler and his weapon almost 10 feet away from the ring! If Tolos had any thoughts of returning, Andre's glowering countenance dispelled all those intentions!

By this time, Zulu had recovered and was ready for battle with Andre. One man would walk away from their struggle $20,000 richer. The other would walk away with as much as the first man eliminated from the match. A lot of pain had been absorbed for each man to get this far. For one of them, it would be for nothing.

The two huge athletes engaged in a titanic battle, each mammoth body straining for its last ounce of strength. The crowd was often brought to its feet by the scientific, but brutal action. The pair wouldn't resort to illegal tactics, but everything else that was permissible was done.

When it was all over, Andre had won the Los Angeles Battle Royal. His victory proved his great ability. Bloody but happy, Andre proudly waved his check as the crowd cheered.

In the dressing rooms, the other wrestlers quietly got dressed and left the arena. The money they'd invested as entrance fees was lost forever. They'd gambled and lost. Of all the 21 wrestlers who had entered this great event, only one walked away smiling.

Yet, next year they'd all be back. Each believes next time the proper combination of luck and skill will be his—as well as the large cash prize.

□

THE BEHIN OF A

CHRIS TAYLOR AND Wahoo McDaniel claim not to be bitter. Yet both admit to pangs of sadness every time they see Billy Robinson and Crusher wear the A.W.A. tag team championship belts. Taylor and McDaniel came within a cowardly disqualification from winning the belts themselves.

"Nick Bockwinkle and Ray Stevens no longer have the belts," Wahoo declares, "and that's the important thing. They were the champions before Robinson and Crusher and they were the miserable pair Chris and I wrestled for the championship.

"We should have won the title. Hell, we *did* win it! It doesn't take away all the hurt but their not being champions any longer is a big consolation. Bockwinkle and Stevens were disgusting champs!

"I could smell, taste, and feel the title that night. Chris and I were tense in the beginning, which is why we lost the first fall. But from the second fall on, we were unstoppable. If you've ever been on a team where everyone is exceeding his capabilities, where the sum of the team is greater than its parts, then you know what I'm talking about. We were better together than we could be separately. That's what a championship team has to be. I felt this would be the first of many great title matches. I was proud to be a part of it.

"And then, before I could even realize what happened, the dream was over. All I could see were the yellow backs of Stevens and Bockwinkle running back to the dressing room. Champions? Champion cowards!

"As long as they held the belt, they insulted wrestling. I was probably the third happiest person in the world when Robinson and Crusher took the belts from those bums."

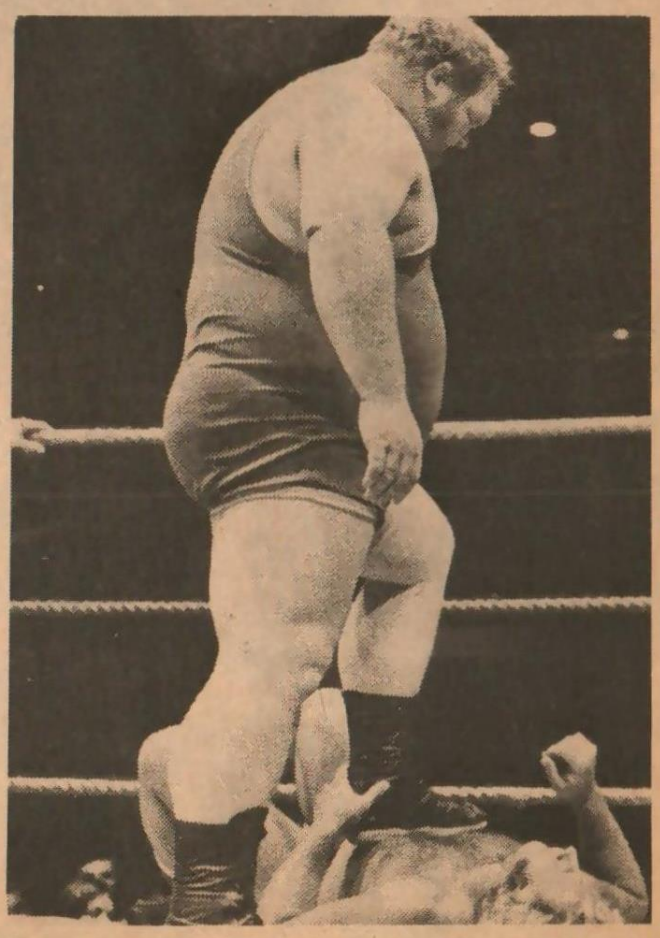
Chris Taylor's hatred runs just as deeply as Wahoo's. In addition, Chris is new enough to the sport that he can still be genuinely surprised by the tactics of wrestlers like Stevens and Bockwinkle. And with justification, he takes credit for the eventual victory of Robinson and Crusher.

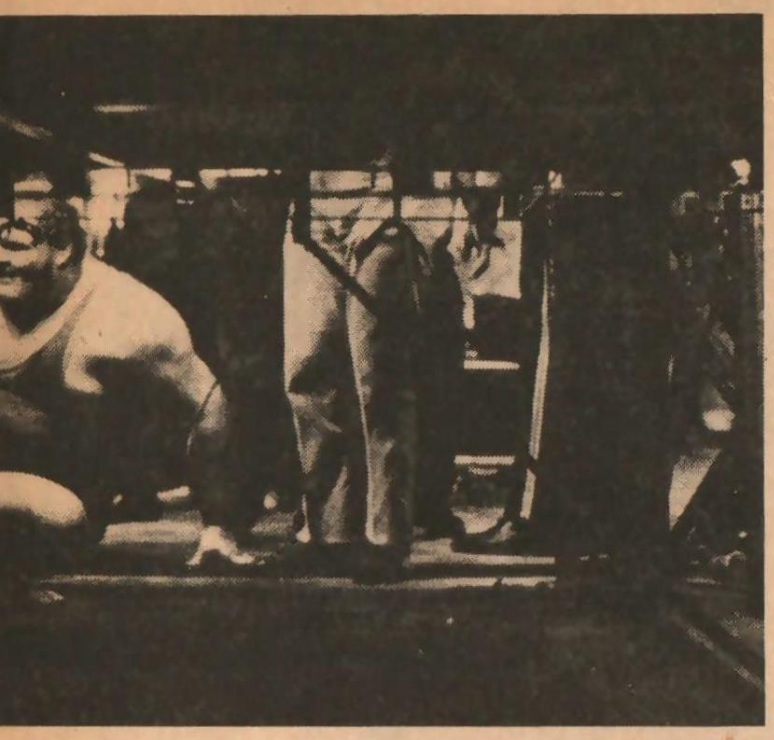
"How can men call themselves champions," Chris asks, "and not defend the title honorably? That's inconceivable to me. They wrestled illegally with no regard for the science of the sport. I haven't been a professional wrestler a long time so I was overwhelmed by such crude, cowardly men. I wouldn't dignify them by calling them wrestlers.

"Of course, I wanted to win the championship. It's every wrestler's dream to get to the top, especially in his rookie year. What's so galling is we did everything right and had the title stolen from us.

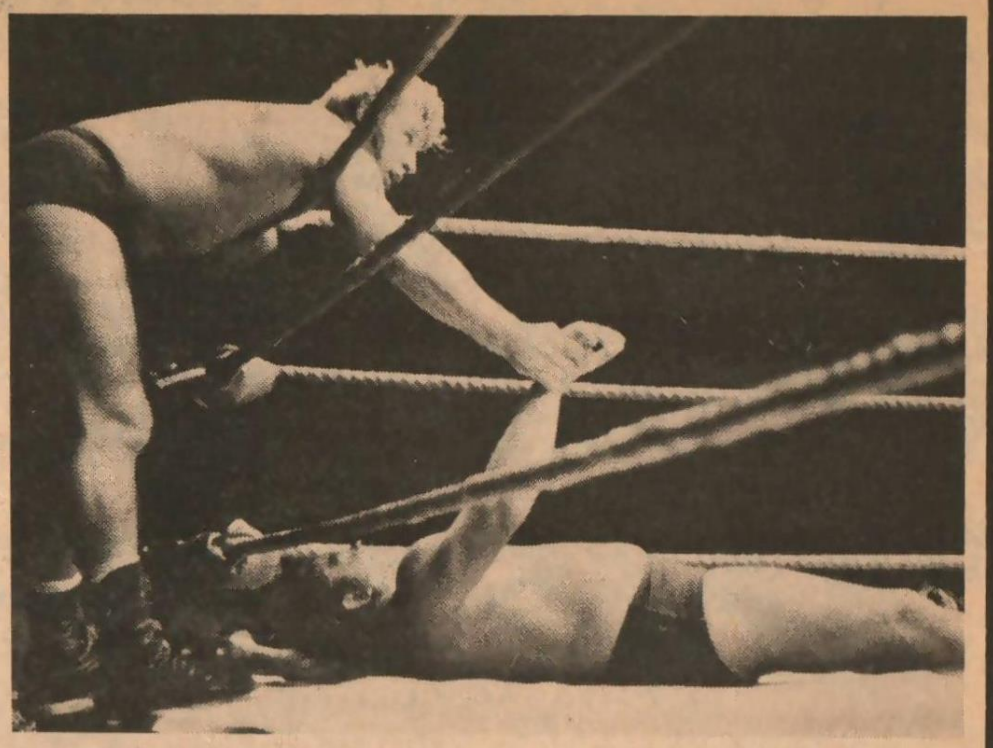
"But there are two reasons why I feel we really made it possible for Robinson and Crusher to win the title. First, we beat the hell out of Bockwinkle and Stevens. You don't come back from a beating like we gave them. It takes something away

(Continued on page 62)



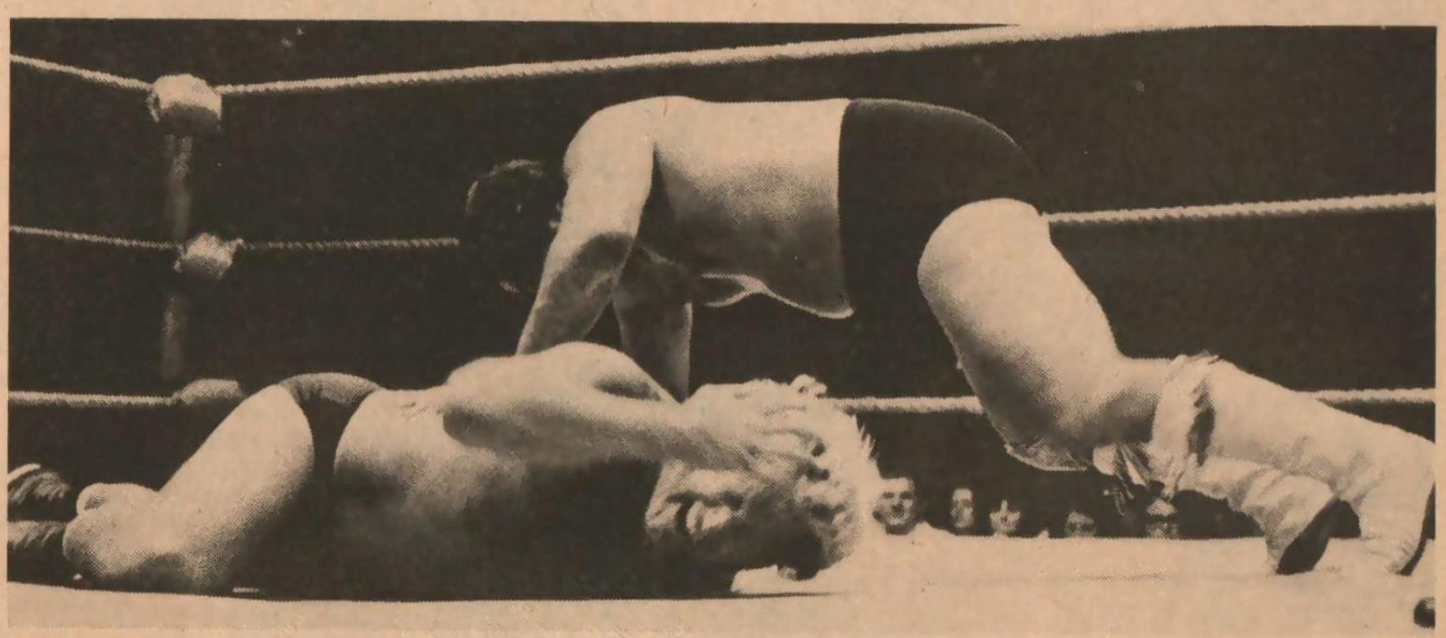


Our photographer ducks under the ring to take a photo of Chris Taylor crashing to the cement after being hurled over the ropes (left). Bockwinkle tags Stevens, who Wahoo McDaniel beat senseless late in their battle (right).



REAL REASON D THE DOWNFALL BOCKWINKLE ND STEVENS!

Opposite page, left: Chris Taylor steps down on Nick Bockwinkle's chest. Chris uses his powerful bulk to crush the air out Nick's lungs. Right: The action becomes so furious that Wahoo McDaniel and Nick are both trying to recover from blows at the same time. Wahoo recovered before Nick could even get off his wobbling knees.



Nick Bockwinkle and Ray Stevens lost the A.W.A. tag team crown to Billy Robinson and Crusher. But the match that may have cost them their title happened just a week earlier

PHOTOS BY BOB SABRE

SHEIK BURN

"THIS TIME HE'S FINAL

Sheik hurls fire into the face of referee Johnny "Red Shoes" Dugan, one of the most heinous actions ever seen in wrestling.

REVULSION AND HORROR filled every single spectator in the packed arena. Lying on the mat, shrieking hideously through the hands clutching his face, writhed referee Johnny "Red Shoes" Dugan. Dugan became the first referee in the endless succession of burned victims of Sheik's fire.

Sheik saw his victim and didn't wait to be disqualified. He ran back to the dressing room as his opponent, Pampero Firpo, knelt over the screaming Dugan. The crowd's outraged yells followed Sheik down the aisle. Pampero's eyes blazed hatred as they stared at The Sheik's disappearing form.

The stretcher was carried towards Dugan, as it has been so many times before for Sheik's victims. Dr. Bernhard Schwartz quickly administered minor medication to Dugan in hopes of stopping the pain somewhat. Hustled on the stretcher into the dressing room, Johnny's cried of pain became whimpers of fear and numbing horror.

Dr. Schwartz labored over the burn for more than an hour. He quickly but carefully cleaned the wound, having to wait awhile before doing any real repair work. He also applied a medicated bandage to the burned flesh.

Johnny remained conscious throughout the ordeal. Only when he was ushered off to the hospital did his body become overwhelmed by what had occurred. Dugan was asleep almost as soon as his body lay down

S REFEREE!

LY GONE TOO FAR!"

Referee Johnny "Red Shoes" Dugan may be scarred for life after being horribly burned by The Sheik! Even Pampero Firpo—himself no stranger to The Sheik's cruelty—couldn't believe this despicable act

PHOTOS BY THEO EHRET

Dr. Bernhard Schwartz applies new bandage to Johnny Dugan's badly burned cheek. The white ointment on Dugan's cheek was applied by Dr. Schwartz to prepare Dugan for the hospital.

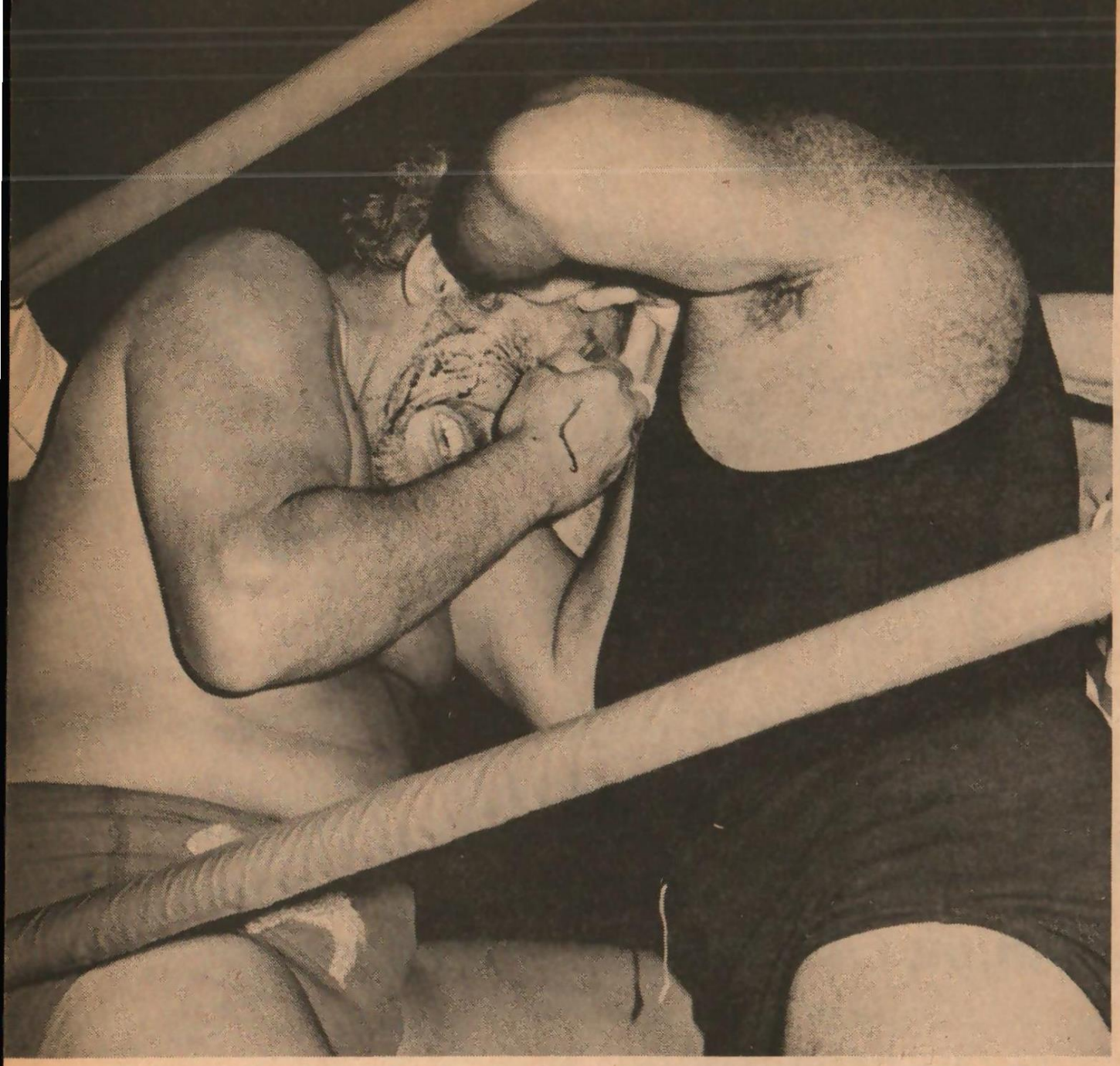
on the ambulance stretcher.

Dr. Schwartz watched his patient leave and then sank exhausted into the nearest chair. Too tired to sleep, he preferred to answer questions about the burn—and The Sheik.

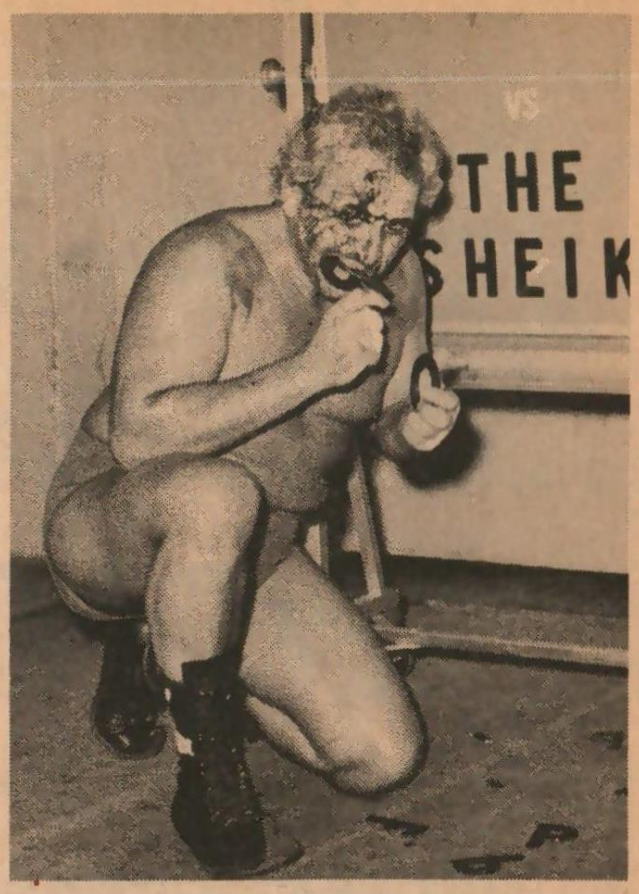
"What you have to do first," Dr. Schwartz said, "is to prevent shock. The brain really can't take that sort of thing. It's a helluva thing to happen and the brain's first reaction is shut everything out, go into shock. I've seen a lot of wrestlers go into shock but Dugan didn't. He's a very strong, brave man. He shouldn't be too badly scarred by what happened tonight. Yet, you can never tell. That's for sure, you can never tell.

"Except for The Sheik. Him you can tell about. You know he'll always try to do something more horrible than he's ever done. The man's brain is so vile it can think up stunts the world's leading torturers would admire. This time he's burned a referee. No one is safe when Sheik's around.

"I'm getting sick and tired of hav-



After opening a gash on Sheik's head, Firpo works on the wound to open it up even further (above)! When these two men tangle, there are no limits to the amount of torment to be inflicted. And there is no limit to what can be used, as Sheik grabs a chair which he hopes to crack against Pampero's skull (below). Pampero, however, was waiting expectantly for this maneuver and knew just how to combat it!



After the bloody match with Firpo, Sheik eats the letters of Pampero's name right off the arena's bulletin board (above)!

ing good, decent men come to me hideously burned, bordering on shock, because of that . . . *monster!* He *has* to be stopped. Can't people see he's gone too far? What more does he have to do before people finally say, 'Enough already!' "

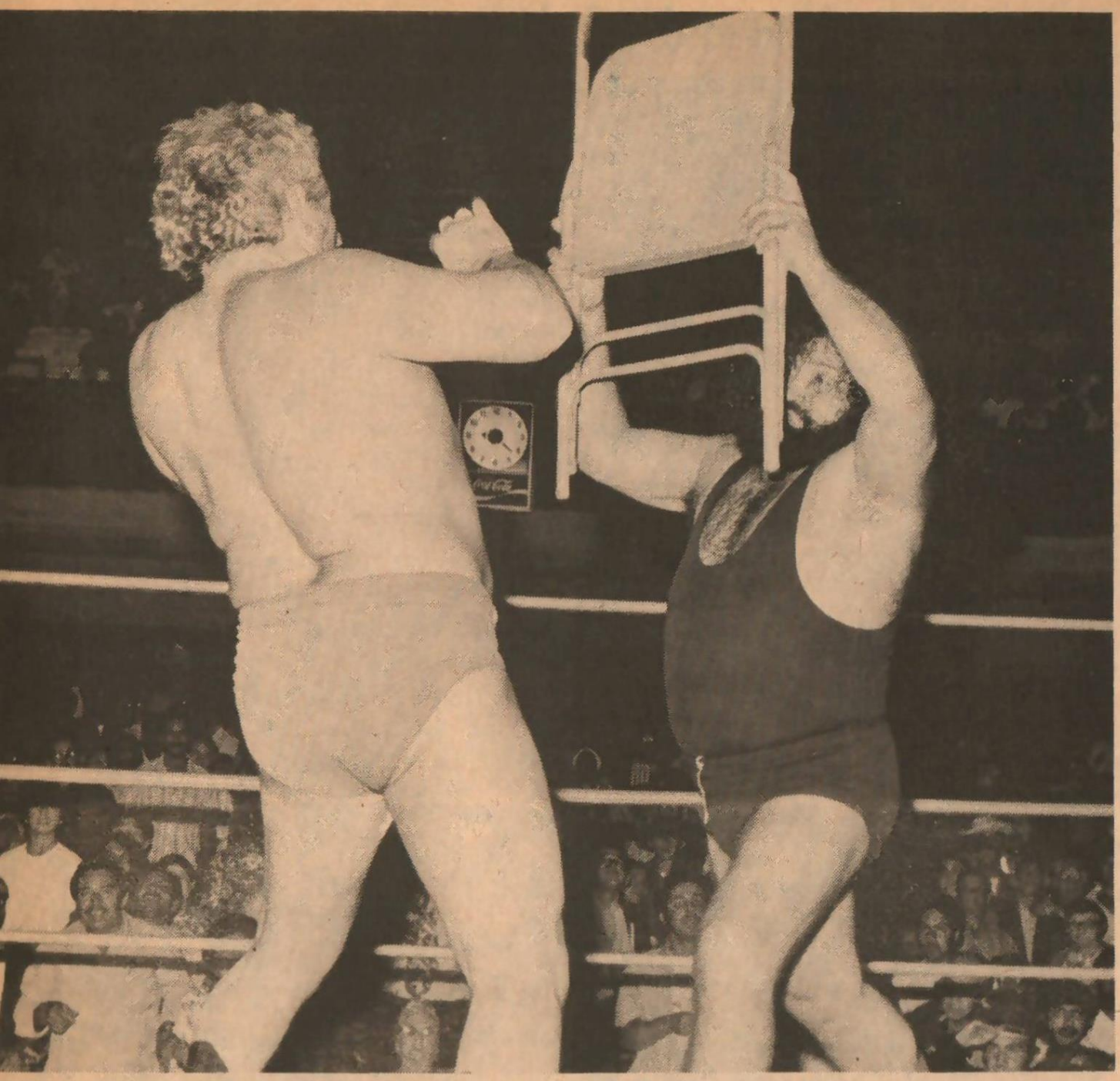
Then his shoulders bowed and the sound of his footsteps echoing through the long corridoe, Dr. Schwartz left for home, carrying his medical bag and another memory of The Sheik's cruelty.

Meanwhile, as the doctor had been laboring over Dugan, Sheik had been far from idle. Still bleeding from the beating Pampero Firpo had handed him, Sheik attacked a bulletin board on which his name and Pampero's name appeared. While his latest victim was being treated for burns inflicted by him, Sheik grabbed the letters of Pampero's name and ate them! This was to show everyone present what would happen the next time Sheik and Firpo tangled.

To expect Sheik to even think about the man whose life he almost ended minutes before is too much.

Naturally, Sheik refused to talk to the angry officials and reporters. It was up to his manager, Eddie Creatchman, to defend the horrible burning for which Johnny was still being treated.

"First of all," Creatchman claimed, "the unfortunate burning of the referee was an accident. As you all saw, Firpo's tactics had Sheik badly bleed-



Firpo grabs the chair from Sheik and starts battering away at his opponent (above). Sheik tries unsuccessfully to protect himself from the beating. Later in the match, almost blinded by his own blood, Sheik punches Firpo repeatedly in the face (below). It does him no good as Firpo recovered from the blow and continues his attack.

ing. It was the most reprehensible exhibition of dirty wrestling ever witnessed, even for a lowlife like Firpo. He even attacked my wrestler with a chair!"

Someone mentioned the chair had been taken from Sheik, a weapon handed to him by Creatchman. Eddie ignored the point of information and continued with his defense of the indefensible.

"As a last resort, in a perfectly normal desire to defend himself against an insane assault, my man threw fire at Firpo, only as a warning. Unfortunately, Mr. Dugan, the referee, stepped in the way. It's unfortunate but Sheik is not responsible."

An official angrily declared Firpo was no where near the flames and it is inconceivable there was an intended victim other than the referee. Creatchman ignored this too and walked away. In his wake were some very angry people.

Two days later, still in the hospital, Johnny Dugan declared, "What happened with Sheik was the most terrifying experience of my life. I have the greatest admiration for any man who can wrestle him more than once.

"I've had a lot of time to think these past couple of days. Sheik burned a referee, which is a lot more serious than anything he's ever done before. A referee is the final figuré of authority in a match, the one who assures it will be a sporting event and not a brawl, not a murder. Wrestling is a magnificent sport, one to which great athletes dedicate their lives. The referee is responsible for the best, most honest wrestling possible.

"If Sheik can attack referees, or even make them live in a state of fear, then the sport is finished. A man must not be allowed to destroy the authority of the referee. Sheik cannot be controlled. Therefore, I feel he must be banned from wrestling."

Many others have taken up the cry for Sheik's banning since this incident. One man who is against it is, oddly enough, Pampero Firpo!

"Sheik must be gotten my way!" Pampero declares. "Wrestlers must drive heem out of wrestling, not officials. I agree. He has gone too far and must never wrestle again. But we have to make heem afraid to wrestle! And only other wrestlers can do dat!"

Whatever the means, whatever the methods, all are in agreement. Sheik must be driven out of wrestling! He has finally gone too far! □

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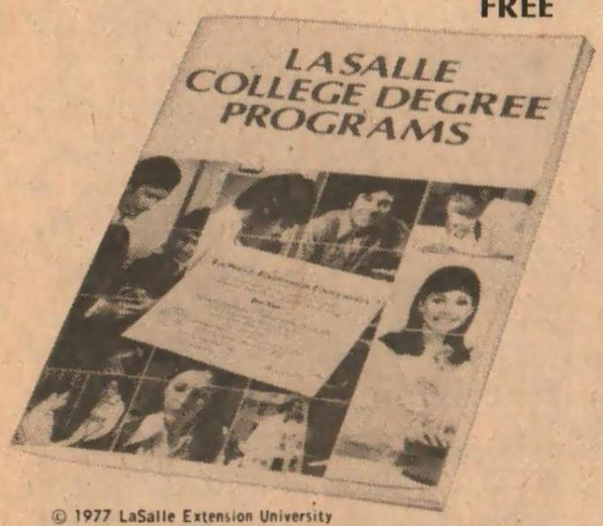

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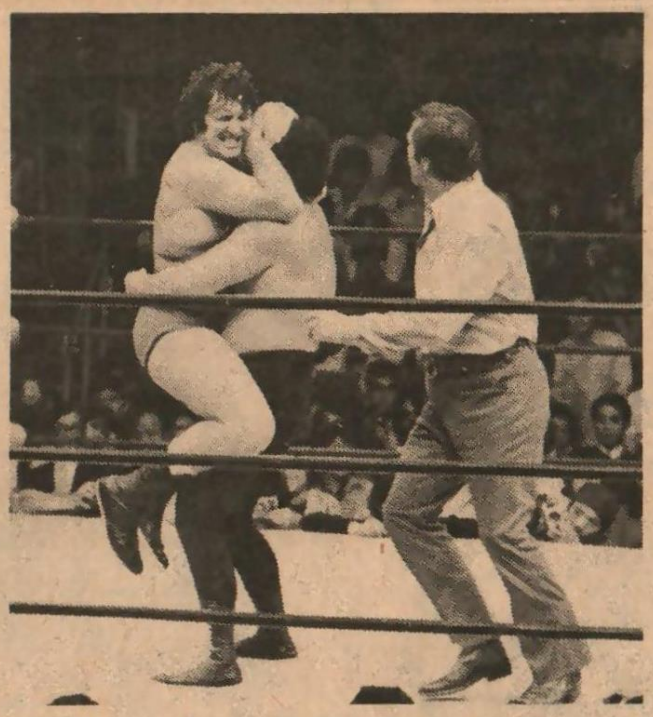
BILLY ROBINSON *(Continued from Page 8)*

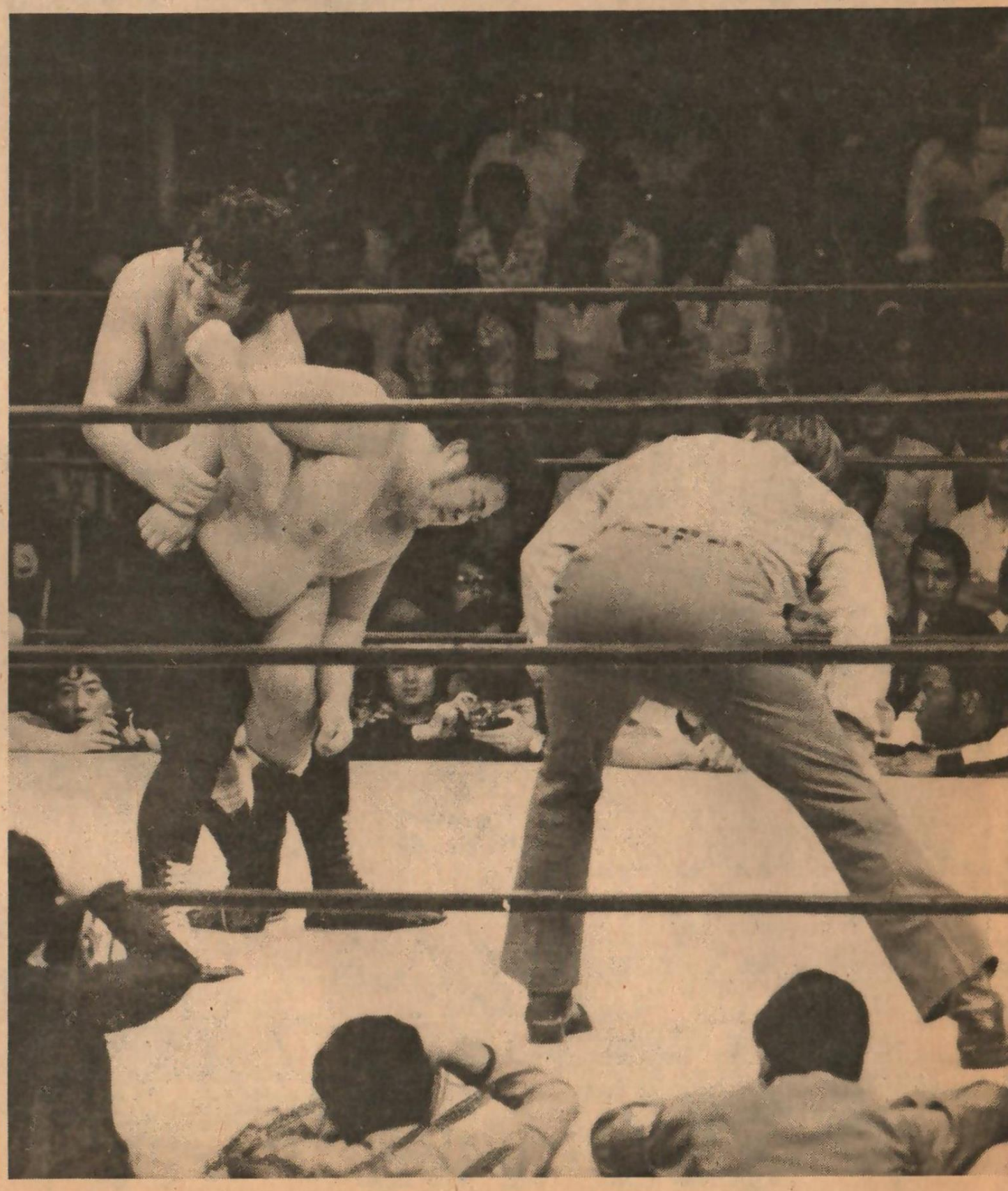


Crusher Kimura tortures Billy in his bearhug (above). Billy uses his great strength and stamina to break the hold and armlocks his opponent (below).

better than ever before. Man, this is a beautiful country!"

Billy didn't depend only on luck. He talked to people who had wrestled Crusher Kimura and studied films of the I.W.A. champion. Billy regularly practiced the holds he felt could best defeat Kimura. He knew his entire reason for being in Japan was to win that belt. Without it, all his accomplishments would seem so much ashes in his mouth.

The night of the match, fans filled the Tokyo arena for the chance to see the world famous wrestling star try to become the I.W.A. champion. Billy nervously paced up and down in his dressing room, going over his strategies and preparing himself psychologically for the



contest.

"This is it," he whispered to himself before walking down the aisle towards the ring. "It all boils down to this match!"

The arena shook with the fans' cheers as Billy made his appearance. They also wanted Billy to gain the championship and made their preference known by their shouts of encouragement. Kimura, wearing the I.W.A. belt, snarled as boos flooded the arena at his appearance.

When the match got under way, Crusher made it painfully clear he wasn't giving his title away. Robinson knew within 30 brutal seconds why Kimura was the champion. He knew as his back felt like it was being broken by Crusher's infamous bearhug.

Billy escaped from this and many other holds over the course of the match. Slowly but surely, though, he was wearing Kimura down. Soon he won the first fall.

Kimura stormed back desperately and overwhelmed Billy. Within five minutes after the first fall, the match was tied at one fall apiece.

Then in a blaze of action, the two men went at each other as if their lives depended on it. They traded punishing holds and battered each other with brutally executed maneuvers. It looked like a standoff until, almost before anyone knew it, Crusher Kimura was pinned!

There was a moment of silence, then a loud roar which lasted for 15 minutes! While the crowd roared, a Japanese beauty handed Billy a magnificent bouquet of roses. Other wrestlers brought in the fabulous I.W.A. trophy.

Billy, elated, accepted the bouquet and trophy gratefully. Most enjoyable, however, was feeling the weight of the I.W.A. belt around his waist.

All this Billy remembered happily as he flew across the ocean. He was returning to the United States as I.W.A. champion. He could still hear the cheers of the Japanese fans ringing in his ears.

As his jet set down in Minneapolis, Billy's smile turned to a look of grim determination.

"I've won the I.W.A. belt," Billy thought, "and now, I'll win the A.W.A. belt. I'm a champion now!" □

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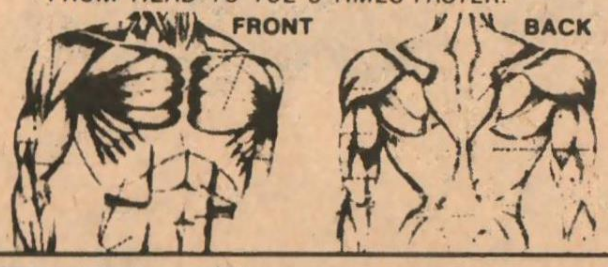

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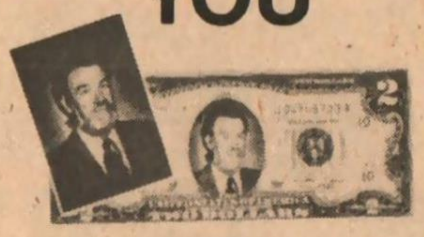

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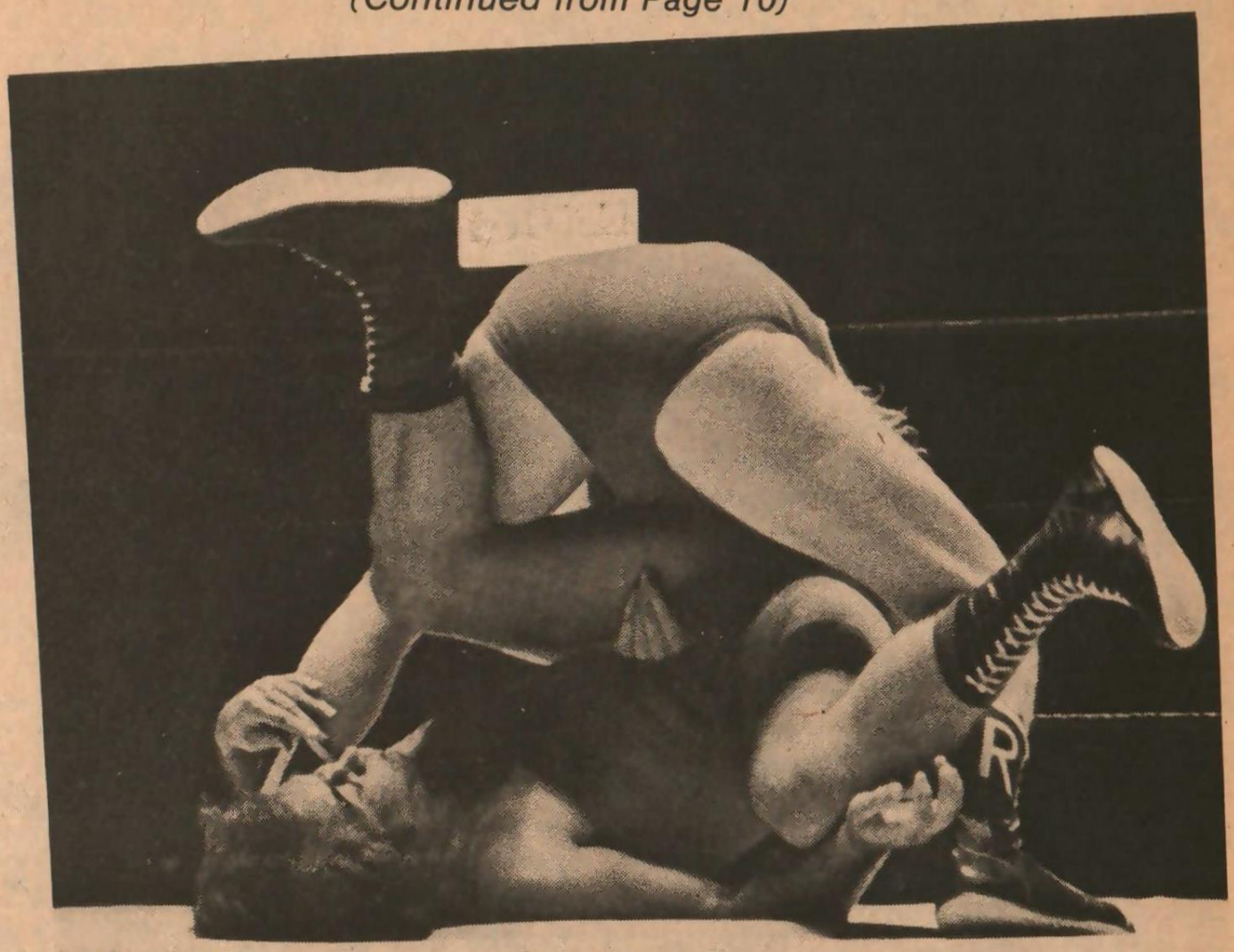
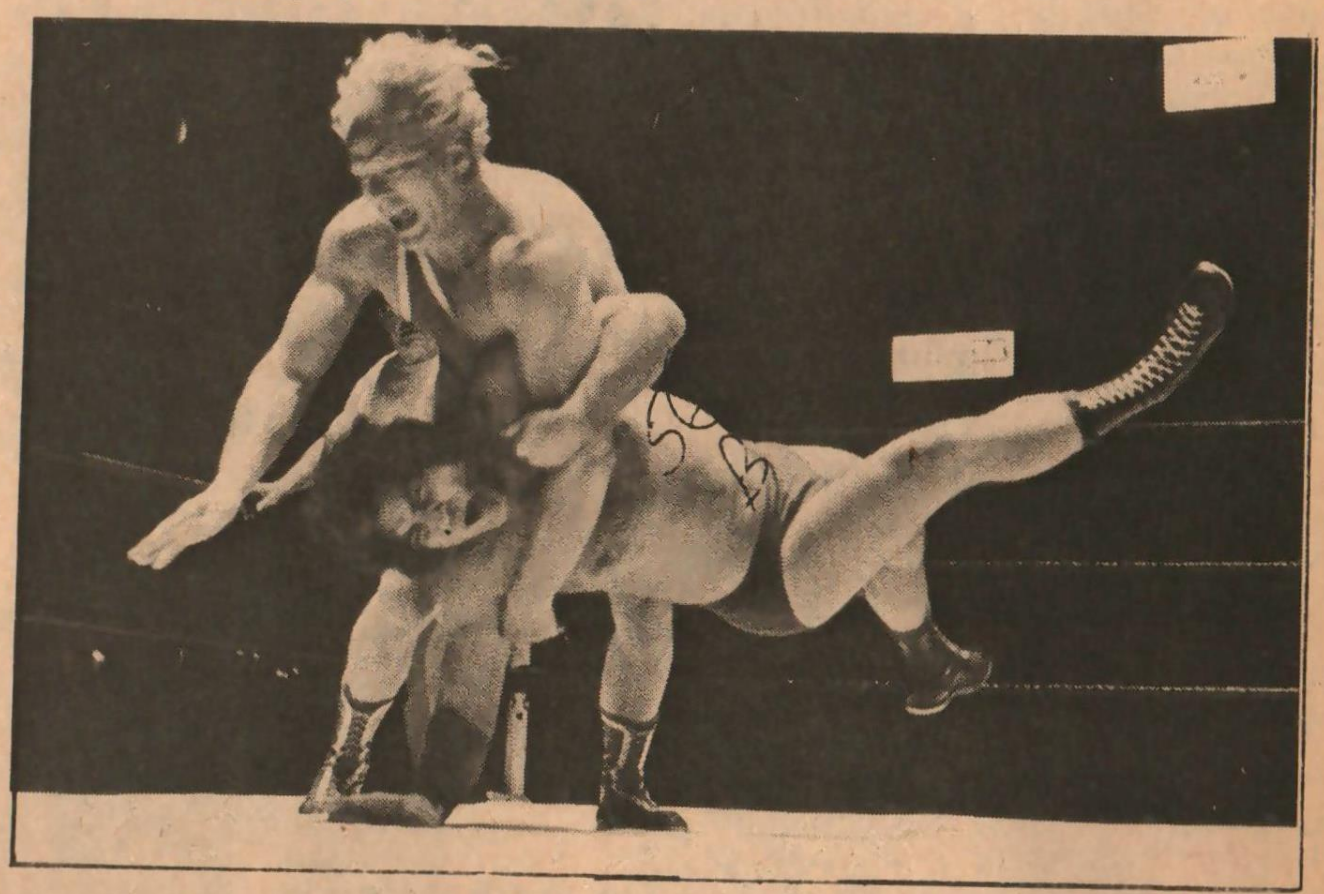
JACK BRISCO

(Continued from Page 10)



Even though Jack is in danger of being pinned, he refuses to use illegal tactics to free himself. Is this the way a dirty wrestler operates? Below: Jack shows he doesn't need illegal tactics by sending Lyons to the canvas with a perfectly executed armdrag.



found few reasons to either boo Jack or accuse him of dirty tactics. The bout, for the most part, was clean. The contestants traded scientific hold for scientific hold. There were however, two interesting developments.

At one point Lyons had Brisco in a painful double armbar. The only way for Jack to get out of it was to slug his way out. So he landed a perfectly legal forearm smash and busted out of the hold.

Here the boos began. "Disqualify him, ref!" some fans yelled. Others called Jack names. Yet,

when two minutes later Brisco clamped the exact same hold on Lyons, and Lyons used the exact same tactic to escape it, the crowd cheered his action.

Another time the crowd voiced its displeasure was when Brisco hurled Lyons out of the ring. However, when Billy did the same to Jack, nobody complained. I asked Jack about these two incidents after the match.

"People see what they want to see," the champion explained. "The exact same move when executed by the crowd's favorite draws a different reaction when the other man uses it. This is how these rumors of a man turning 'dirty' get started. I'm sure there will be some people who saw this match tonight who will say 'Jack Brisco is a dirty wrestler because he slugged Lyons.' Yet Lyons did the same to me. And both incidents involved perfectly legal moves.

"When you travel from city to city and you run into a string of hometown favorites you're bound to get booed. It's natural. You have one guy who wrestles there all the time. Suddenly the champion comes into town and everybody's rooting for the local hero to knock him off. Anything the champion does is considered 'dirty.'

"I'm not the first guy this has happened to. If you remember, the same rumors went around about Dory Funk Jr. when he was the champion.

"I'll admit that rarely I'll do something maybe I shouldn't. But the title's on the line five times a week against all kinds of maniacs, sometimes you react before you think. However, I try not to use tactics like that unless my opponent uses them first. And even when I do—it doesn't mean I'm turning into a dirty wrestler."

Even Billy Lyons, Jack's opponent for the evening, supported what Brisco said. "He didn't do anything that I wouldn't do myself. And I'm not a 'dirty' wrestler. Had our roles been reversed, had I wrestled exactly as he did and used the moves he did, I would not have been booed. Yet he was."

We still get reports about Jack Brisco "turning dirty." But in the matches we've seen, it appears fans are reading more into Jack's style than is really there. □

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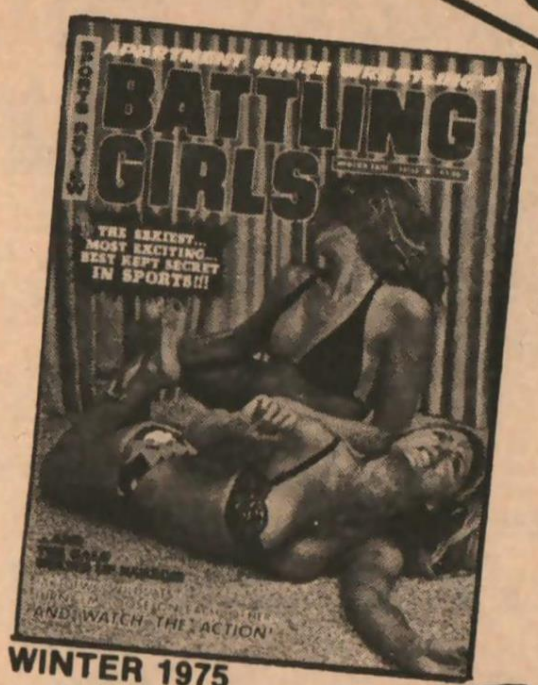

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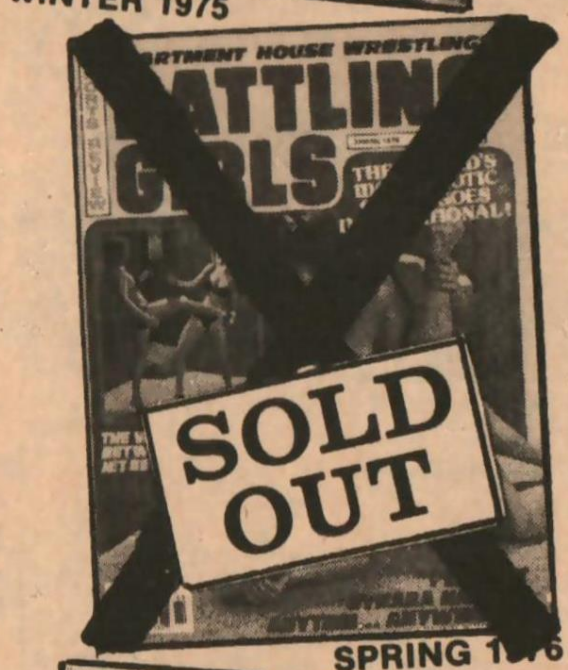

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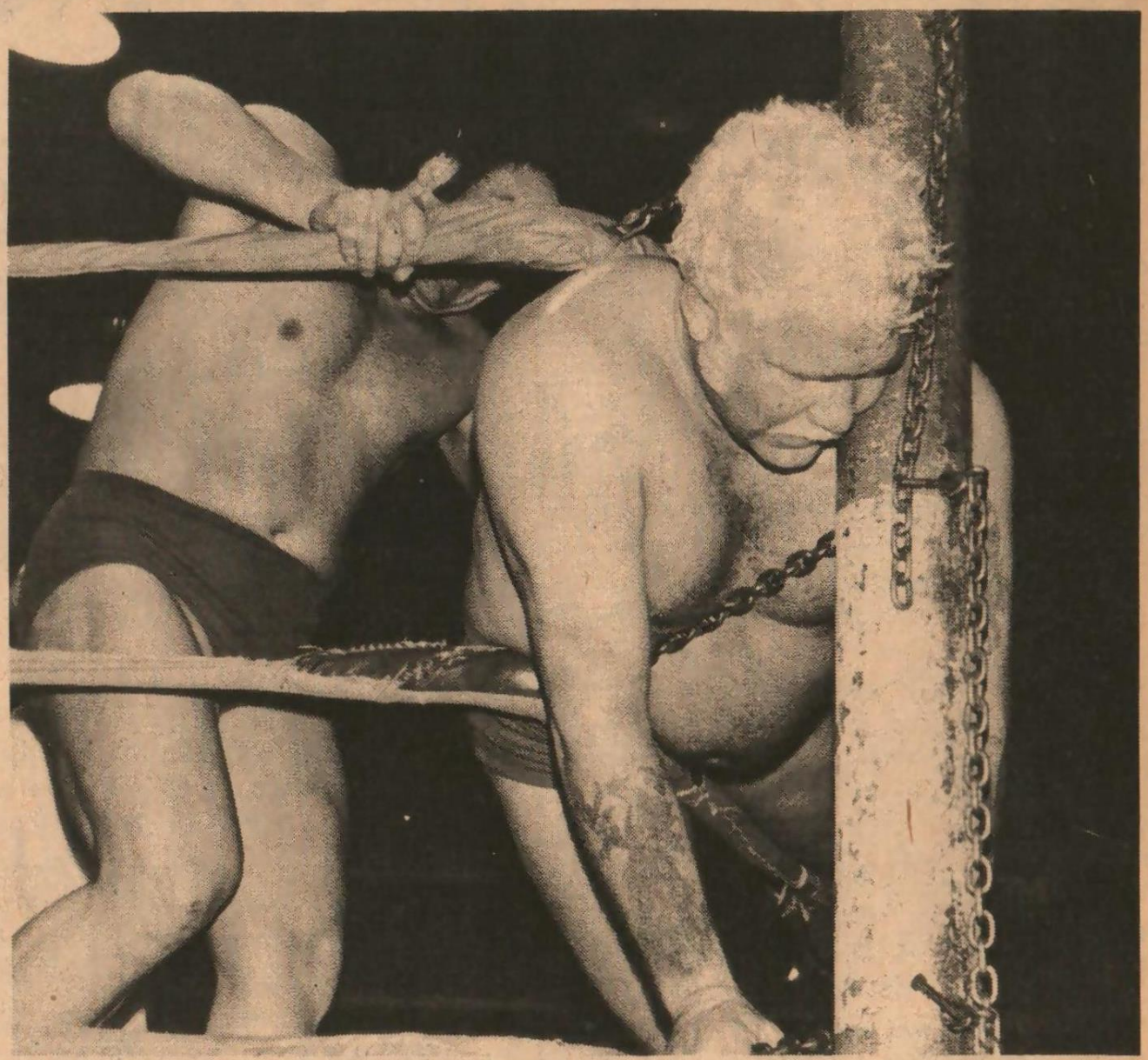
SMASH

(Continued from Page 15)



still look at an opponent and feel fear, then Race must have been afraid.

The match began and Stomper got the crowd screaming quickly. He lifted Race high in the air and slammed him viciously into the corner. Groggy, Race tried to get out of the ring to collect his wits. However, Stomper wasn't going to let him get out that easily. He grabbed Race by the trunks and pulled him back.

Race was lying wearily on the canvas as Stomper climbed the ropes. When Stomper jumped down his foot was speeding with dangerous accuracy toward Race's face.

With his instinct for survival taking over, Race rolled away at the last moment. Stomper stomped hard into the canvas and arrows of pain shot up his leg.

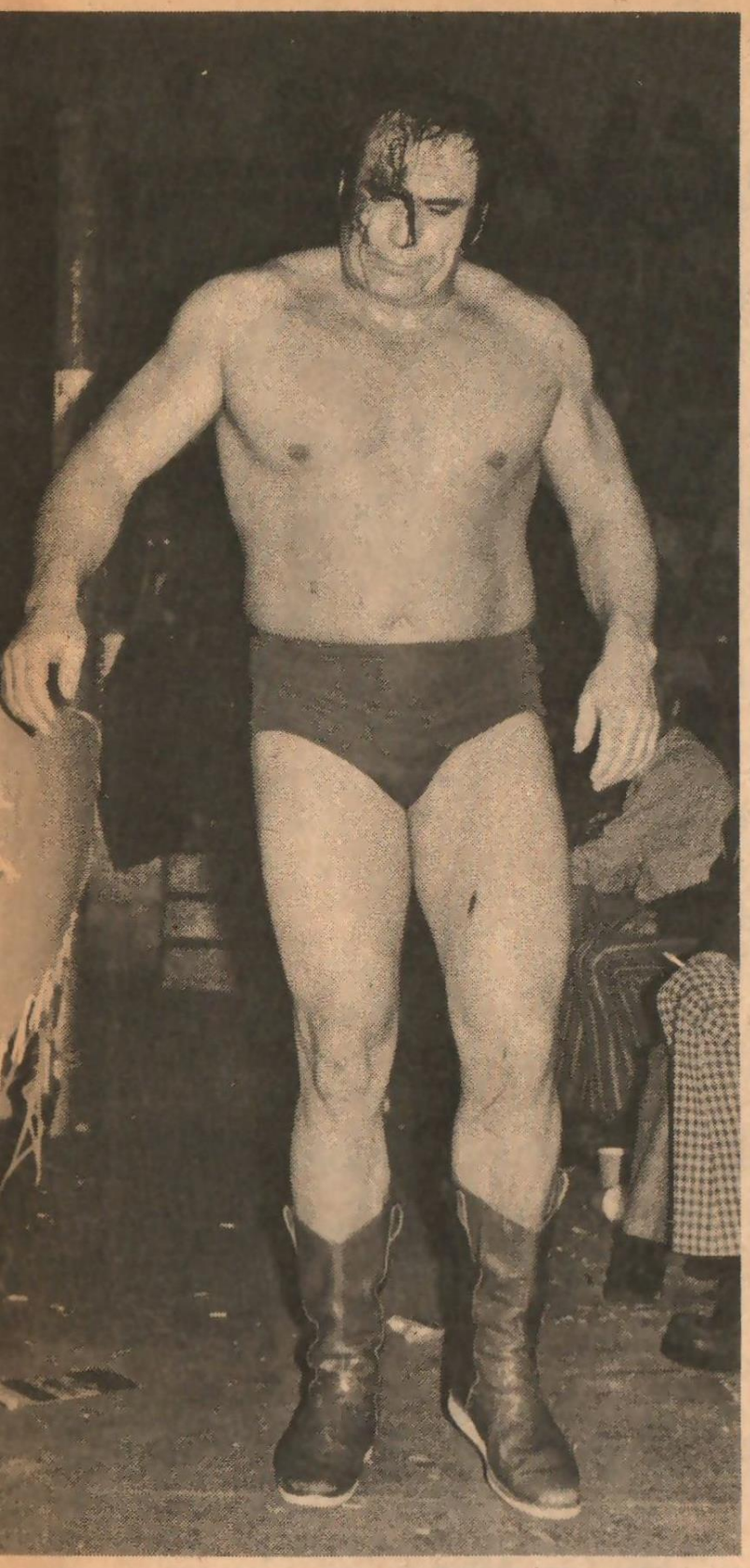
That was the opening Race needed. Before you could say "suplex slam," that's exactly what was happening to Stomper. He forgot the pain in his leg as his back became a collection of agonized muscles.

Stomper then imitated Race as he tried to crawl out of the ring. But Harley grabbed him and went to work on Stomper's face. Six punches later Stomper's face was covered with blood.

Above: Stomper punishes Race by the turnbuckle. Below: Race becomes airborne by Stomper.

However, on the seventh punch Stomper ducked. And Race went sailing over the top rope on his own momentum and went crashing into the cement floor.

That's when Stomper went to work. He smashed Race's face into a ringside seat and soon Harley was as bloody as Stomper. While the two men were brawling outside the ring the referee counted them both out.



Battered and bleeding, Stomper weaves outside the ring as he tries to pursue Harley (above).

That the match was over didn't bother the pair. They continued until the special police broke them up and dragged them to the dressing room.

After getting six stitches in his forehead, Race walked to his mirror.

"Look at my face!" he screamed to those around him. "It's still beautiful. That clown did nothing to it! Nothing!

"Remember this!" he continued, "because I mean it! Stomper tried to rearrange my face! But he couldn't do it. Nobody can! Look at his face! It's what he wanted mine to be!"

However, when they stitched up Stomper's gashes and washed the blood away, Stomper's face was like it was before the match. Neither man had done what he had hoped to do—at least this time. □

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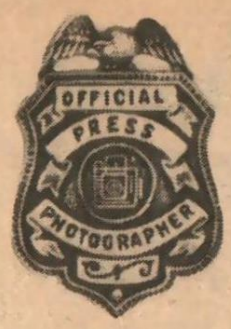

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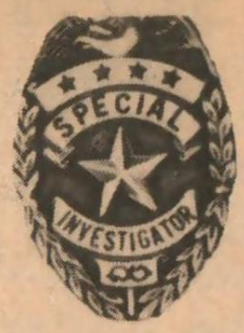

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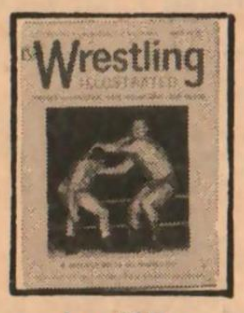

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WHEN RICKY ROMERO SEES RED

(Continued from Page 18)

An enraged Ricky Romero hurls Hank James to the mat (above) and still isn't satisfied. James flees the ring only to have Romero chase him and push his head into the mat. Ricky was determined to show James and his valet, JoJo, that his Mexican heritage is nothing to make jokes about. It is doubtful either one will make any Mexican jokes for a long, long time to come.

and wasn't going to stop for anything anyway.

Ricky grabbed James and began tossing him around the ring. Hank decided that this was not going to be a match he would remember fondly. It was time to leave.

He jumped from the ring only to find a Romero on his back. James' head was repeatedly smashed into the canvas. Soon, his unconscious body slumped to the floor.

But Romero wasn't satisfied. He ran to the dressing room to get JoJo. He smashed on the locked door but couldn't budge it.

"Come out! Come out!" Ricky screamed.

A voice within, quaking, whispered, "Nobody here but us cowards!" ☐

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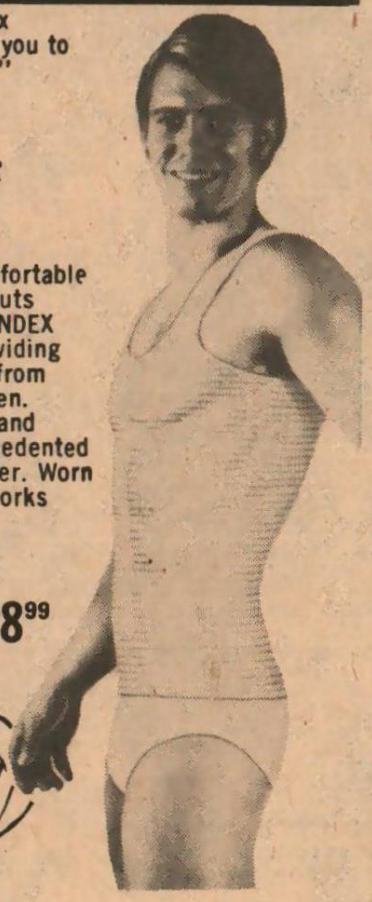

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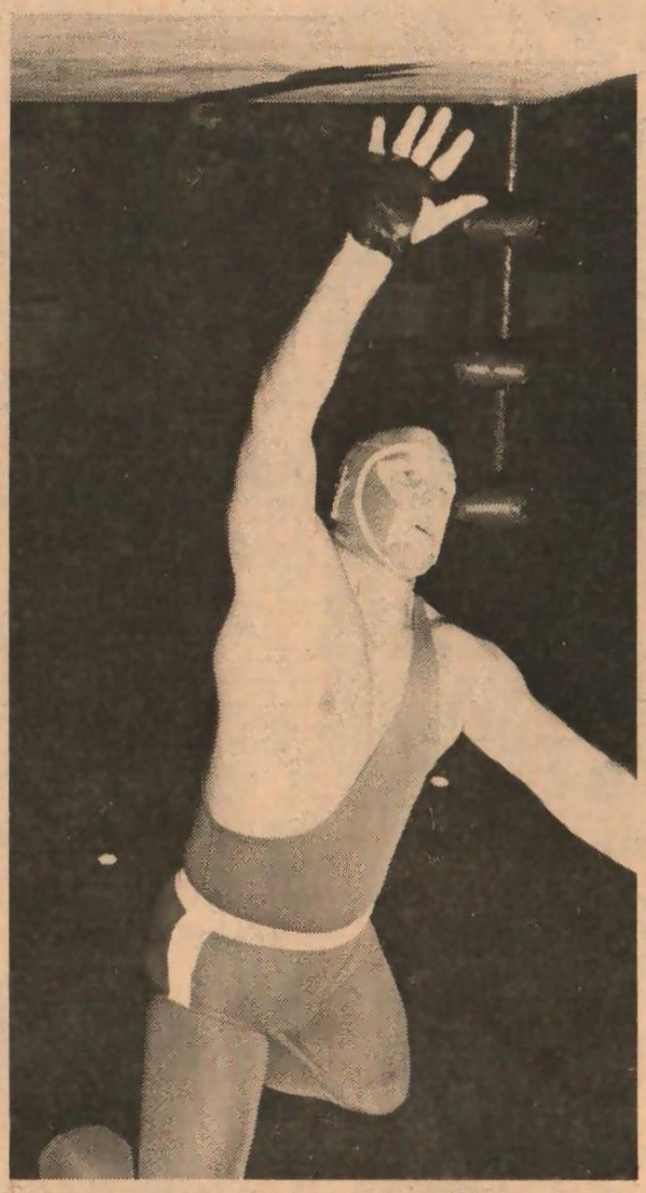
"YOU CREEPS DON'T DESERVE TO SEE MY FACE!"

(Continued from Page 25)

The referee orders Jerry to break the hold (right) because the masked man has his foot draped on the bottom rope. Super Destroyer goes flying (below) as the result of a Jerry Brisco flip. But he came back to give Jerry a troublesome time for the balance of the match.



If it wasn't so sickening it would be funny."

However, there is no denying Super Destroyer is a talented and dangerous wrestler. He is able to back up his threats with a great deal of strength and agility.

"He's a powerful man," Jerry admits, "that's for certain. He's also very skillful. Even his illegal moves show a lot of practice and hard work. He's a very serious athlete who obviously takes great pride in what he does. Moral judgements aside, in his own way he comes close to being great.

"He has the determination and the skill to at least be a threat to the championship. And I don't think he'll let go of it if he ever gets it. He can lose now and blame it on the referee and the fans. But to lose the championship may be more than he can take. I wouldn't relish being in there with him when he defends his championship."

While other wrestlers have feuds with other wrestlers, Super Destroyer has feuds with fans. He sees other wrestlers as a means of getting at the fans. He doesn't even care that another masked wrestler is named the Destroyer.

"I'm so superior to him," Super Destroyer says, "that I don't even think about him. I hate the fans too much to have much hatred for some clown who calls himself 'The Destroyer.' I'm the *Super* Destroyer and that's no lie." □

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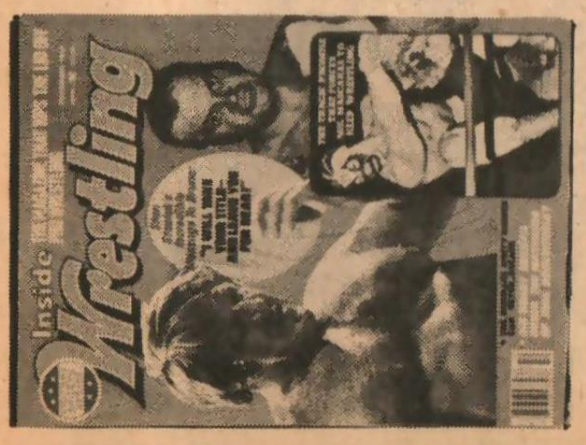

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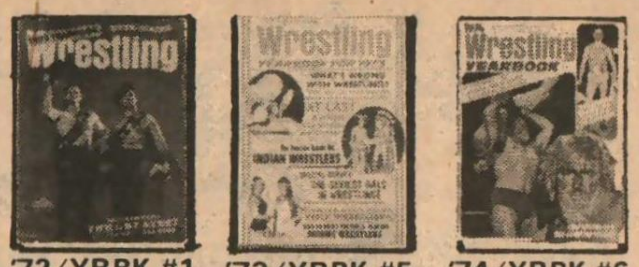

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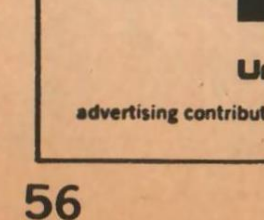

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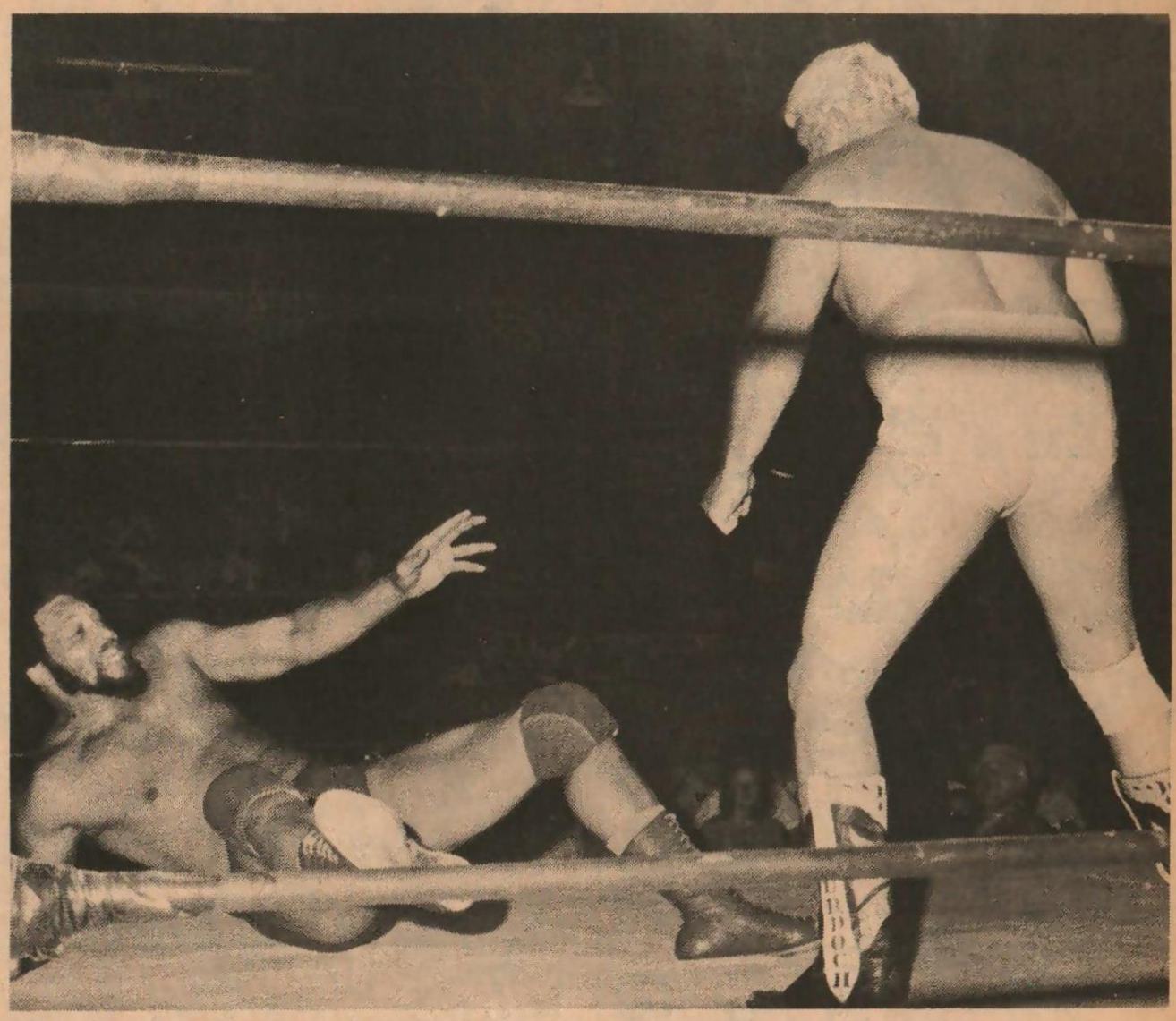
(Continued from Page 27)



towards the ring, the crowd's excitement built in leaps and bounds. The cheers rocked the rafters as the fans tried to give Murdoch encouragement. The Texans respect and admire Murdoch for his great courage in standing up to any wrestler greedy enough to try for the bounty.

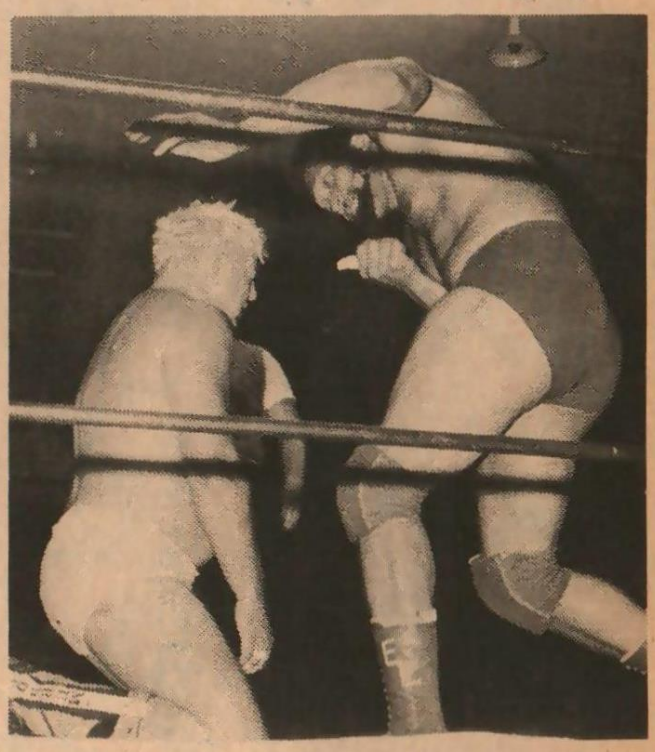
Finally, Ladd and Murdoch stared at each other across the length of the ring. The bell still echoed when the two men charged angrily into each other. Ladd wanted the money as soon as possible. Murdoch wanted to quickly establish his dominance over the match and make Ladd forget any notion of destruction.

The match was less than a minute old when Ladd's bandaged thumb found its way into Murdoch's eye. Ladd rubbed it swiftly around the socket, hoping to blind Dick quickly. With a desperation rooted deep in the need to survive, Murdoch wriggled free and went on the offensive himself.

Dick slammed his elbow hard into Ladd's throat. As the crowd roared its approval, Ernie crashed to the canvas. Ladd's troubles had just begun.

Before Ernie could recover his senses, Murdoch trapped him in a

Above: Ladd begs for mercy from an enraged Murdoch during an especially brutal period of the match. Below: Ladd gouges at Murdoch's eye with his taped thumb while the helpless Murdoch can only absorb the agony.



crushing headlock. Ladd twisted and squirmed but couldn't escape. Giving the neck a final wrench, Dick released it for bigger and better maneuvers.

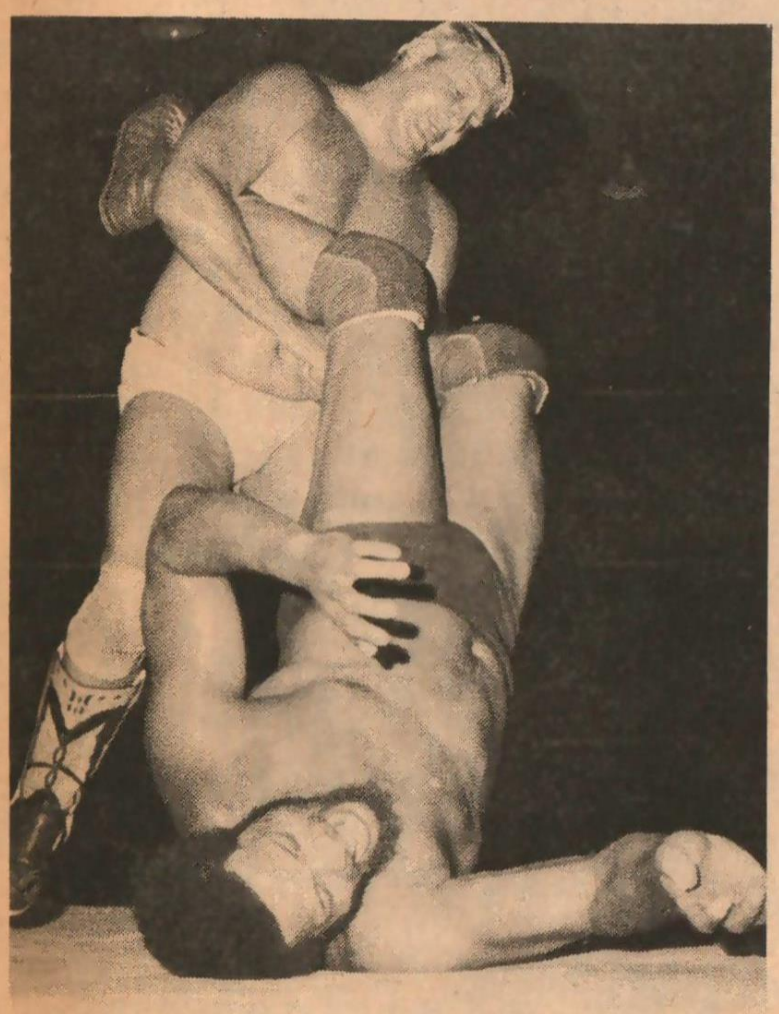
With a swiftness Ladd could not hope to counter, Murdoch put Ladd in the first stages of a Boston crab. Desperately, Ladd tried to squirm free. Slowly, Murdoch seemed des-

tined to complete the hold and win the match.

Dillon watched the proceedings panic-stricken. He saw his greatest hope crumble before his eyes. Without a moment's hesitation, Dillon grabbed the chair and leaped towards Murdoch. The folding chair came crashing down onto Dick's head.

The intense pain failed to make Dick release the hold. He continued to get Ladd trapped in the Boston crab. Ladd continued to struggle and Murdoch continued to panic.

Dillon smashed the chair over Murdoch's head again. And again. And again. He was soon assaulting Dick with the powerful regularity of



Murdoch tries to trap Ladd in a Boston crab while Ernie tries to squirm his way to safety.

a pneumatic drill. The referee finally disqualified Ladd and called the security police to pull Dillon off the ring apron and out of the arena.

When the smoke had cleared and Murdoch had defeated another wrestler whose greed exceeded his sense of decency, Dick walked back to the dressing room to a standing ovation.

As for Dillon, he sat disgustedly in his dressing room. Ladd had quickly dressed and left, leaving Jim with the $10,000 check which he can't seem to give away. □

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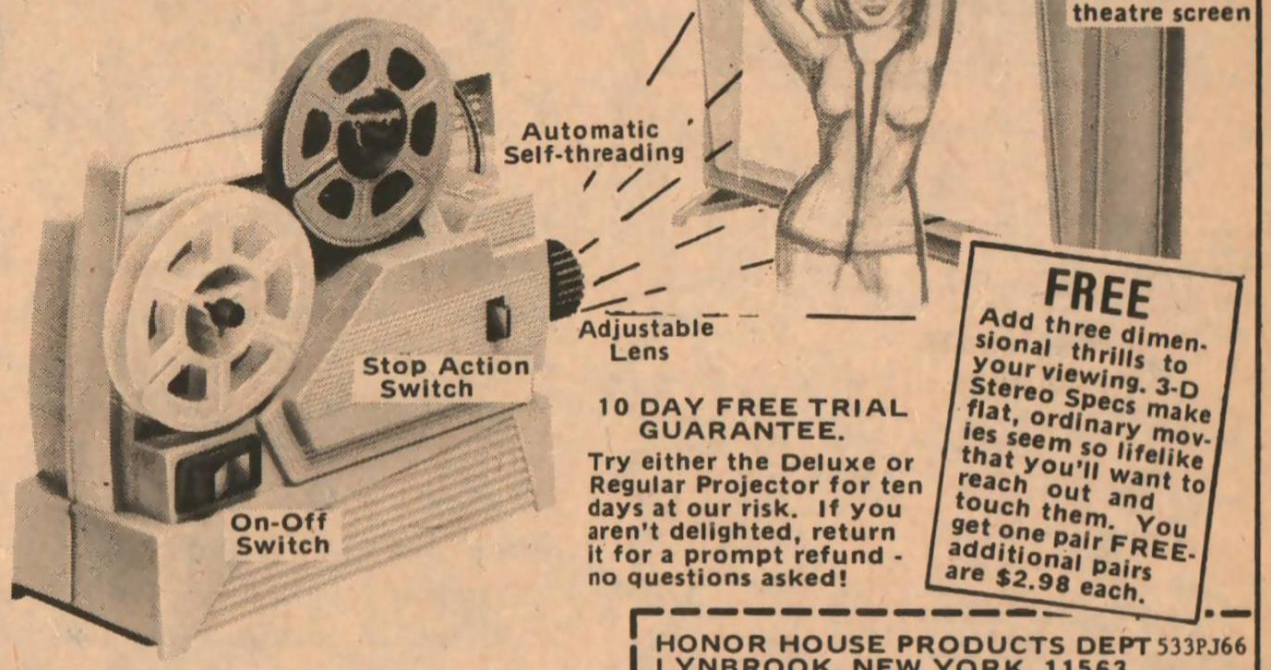

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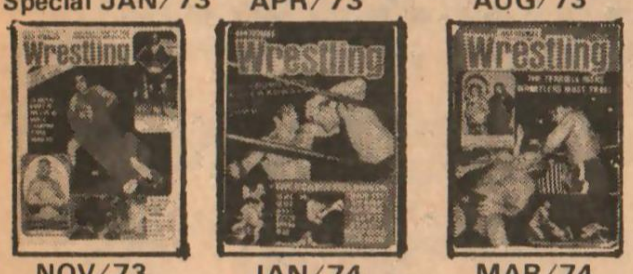

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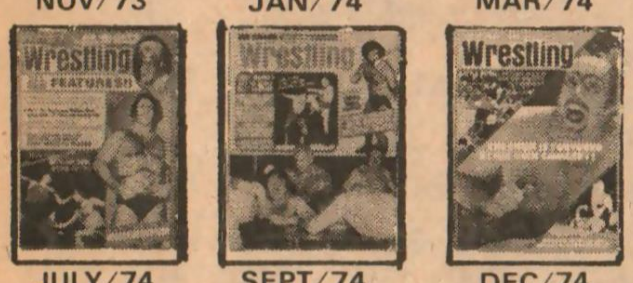

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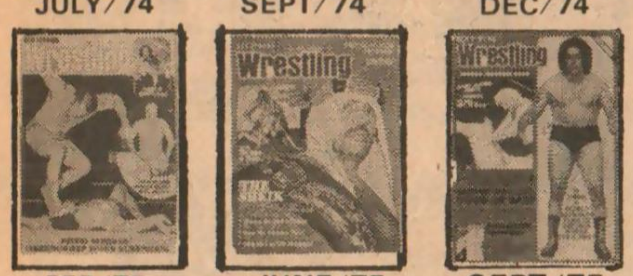

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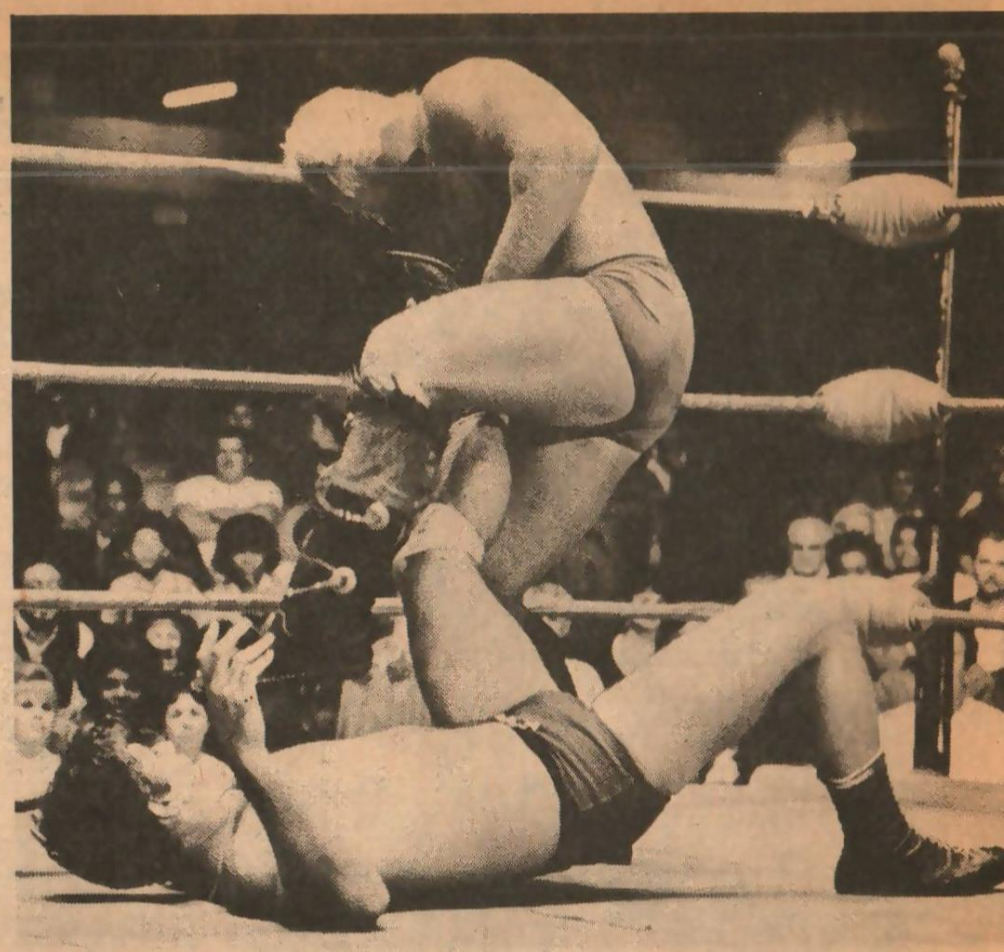
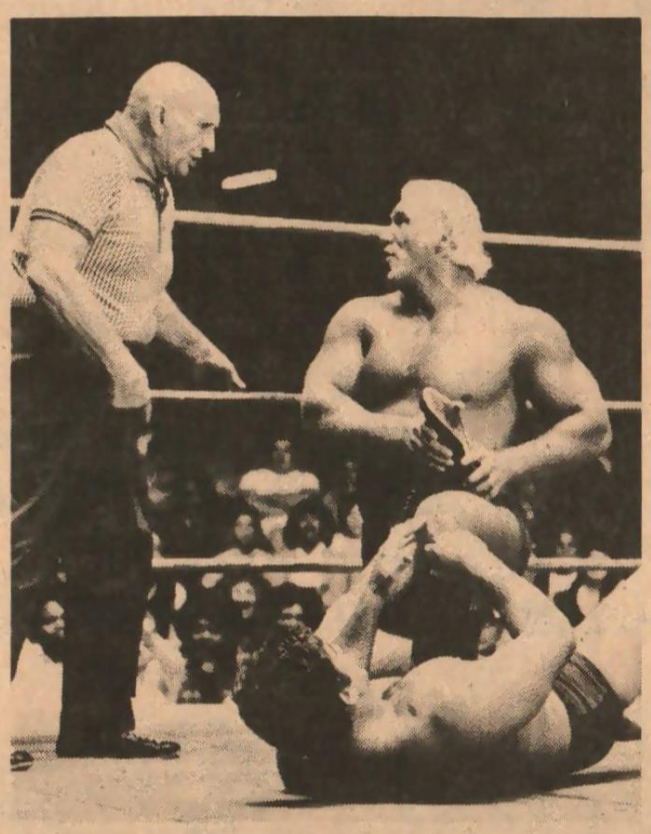
BILLY GRAHAM

(Continued from Page 31)

Graham centers his driving attack on Don Morrow's legs, spear-heading assault with painful step-over toeholds (right and below). Soon Morrow was unable to stand and it was just a matter of time before Don succumbed.





bouts, which is only natural when you have the guys I have for brothers. We've always been a very close family. Anybody who tries to get tough with one of us had better be ready to take on all of us. And you can take it from me, there ain't a guy—no, I mean there ain't ten guys—who could take us Grahams on and walk away under their own power! And if anybody doesn't believe it, just let us know. We Grahams aren't two-faced. We can back up everything we say!"

Billy has been wrestling for about two years. Not much experience, to be sure, but he has developed a series of impressive holds. Let brother Jerry tell you about them . . .

"Billy has learned real fast," Jerry said proudly. "He's got as good a dropkick as I've ever seen, which covers a lot of territory. He's also got a headlock that can bust skulls and a pile-driver that's out of this world. All he needs is a little more experience, a better understanding of how to pace himself under pressure, and how to handle those scientific guys—the kind who give you all that fancy, razzle-dazzle garbage."

Billy has stated several times, and in public, that he is the world's strongest wrestler. Of course he's gotten a lot of arguments about that, but he still says it, and means it!

"Yeh, I've heard all about how strong Bruno Sammartino is supposed to be," Billy says, "and I'd just love an opportunity to exchange bear-hugs with him. I understand from Jerry that the bear-hug is Sammartino's best hold. Okay, so he should have the edge on me. Right?"

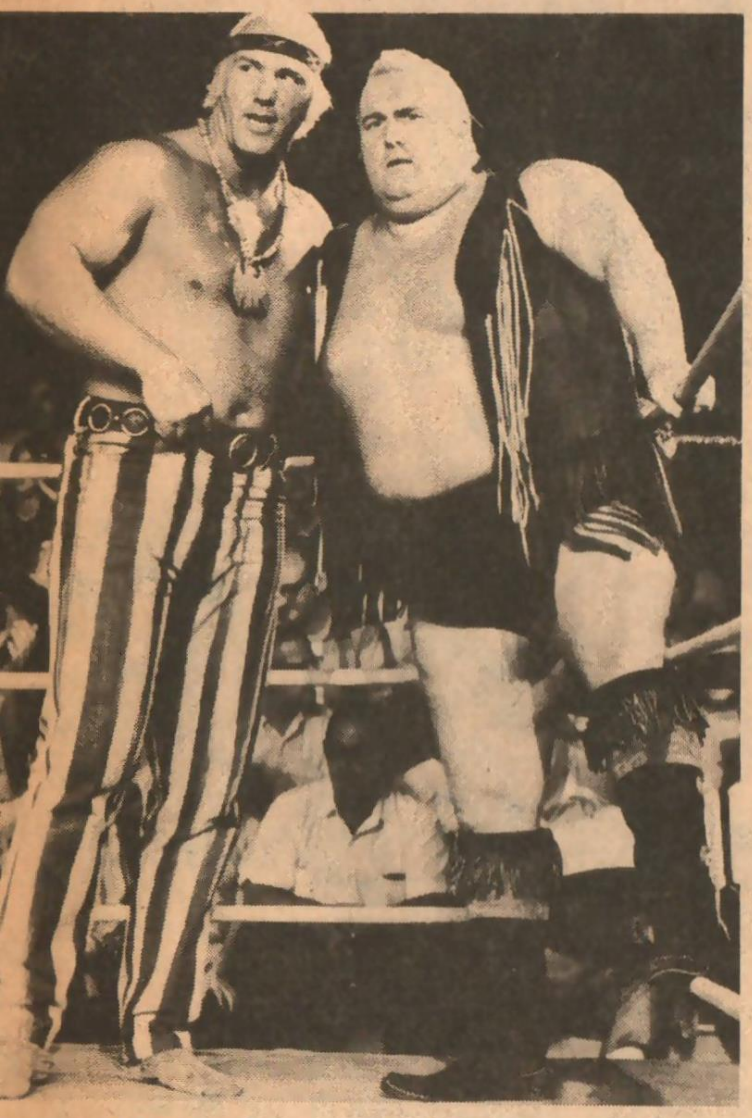
Billy was quick to add that what he said can be taken as a firm challenge to Bruno and that he'll be waiting for Bruno's answer.

"I've wrestled Sammartino many times," Jerry Graham said. "And, of course, I've worked out with Billy a thousand times. Both of them got me in lots of bear-hugs and I'd bet on Billy any night in the week to out-hug Sammartino. Nobody packs as

much raw power in his body as Billy."

As for having the most perfactly developed physique of any wrestler, Billy claims that distinction, too. But that boast is bitterly disputed by the legions of loyal fans who adore the Mexican Adonis, Mil Mascaras.

"They should settle that one in the ring," says Jerry. "Let Billy wrestle Mascaras first and then let them compete in a body beautiful contest. I'm no judge of the male figure, so I don't care



Billy gets some last minute advice from brother Jerry before start of recent bout in Los Angeles.

about that part of it. But I sure know who would win that wrestling match!"

There has been a great deal of talk about the sensational youngest of the Graham brothers, but talk never settled anything in the wrestling profession. The real test of Billy Graham will be made inside the ring. Then, and only then, will we really know whether Billy is as good as he and his brothers claim he is, or whether he is just another Body Beautiful trying to cash in on professional wrestling. We have not yet made up our minds. □

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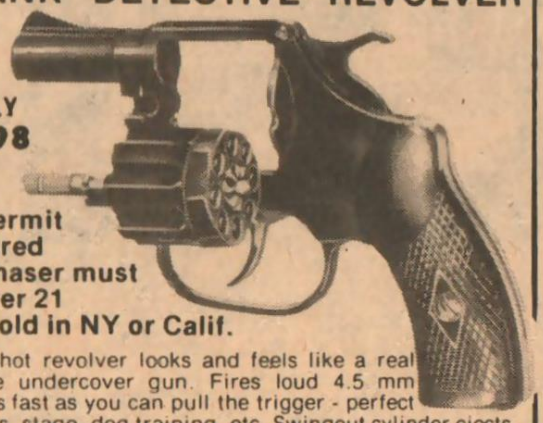
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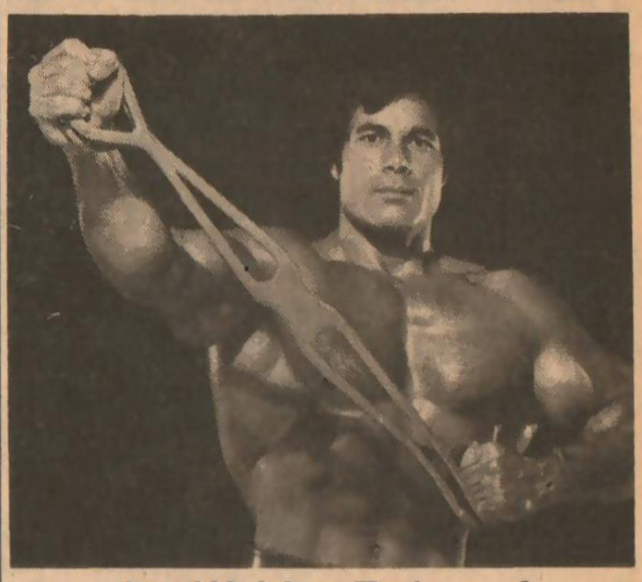

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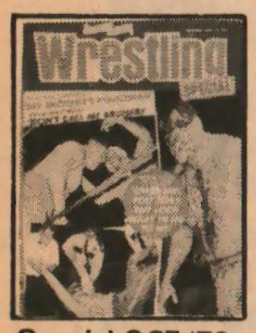

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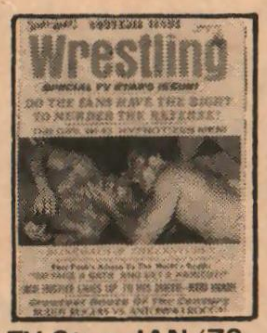

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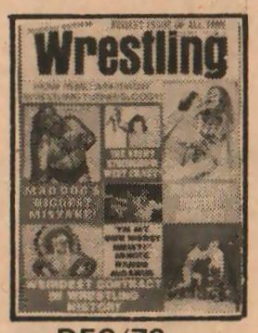

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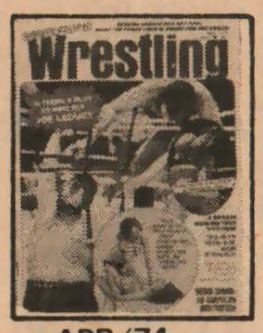
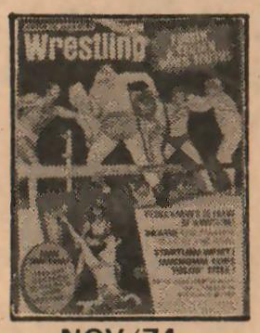


APR/74



NOV/74

MARCH/75

MAY/75

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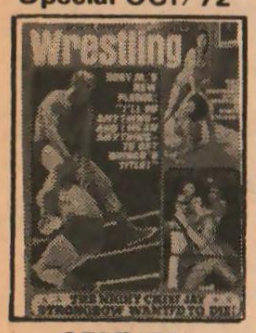

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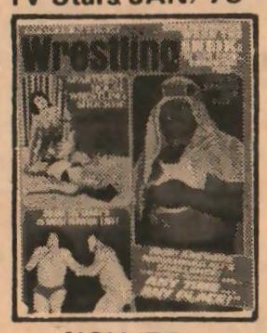

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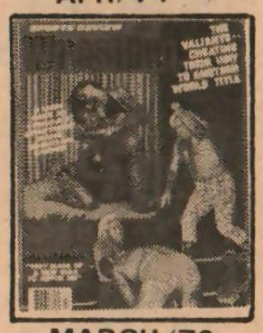

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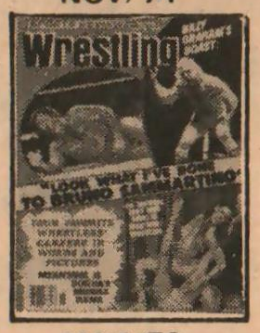

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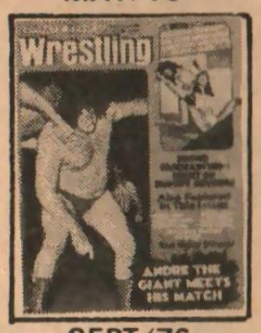

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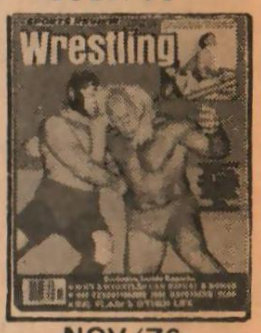

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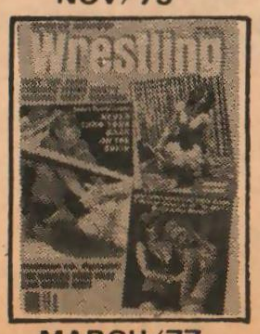

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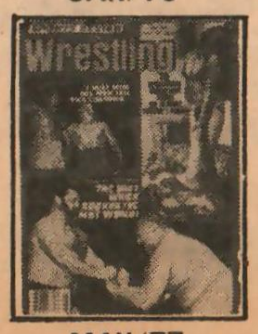

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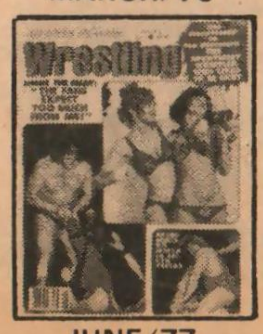
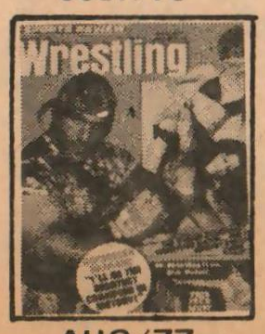


JUNE/77

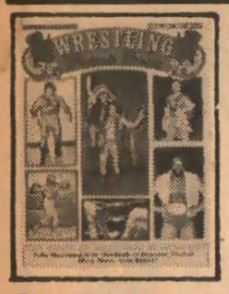
JULY/77



AUG/77

GRAB BAG IN WRESTLING HISTORY

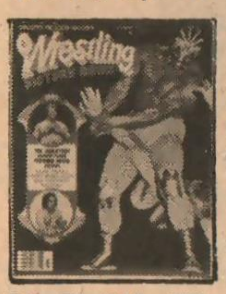
PICTURE BOOK

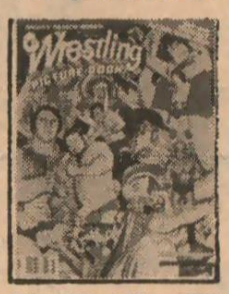

Pic. Bk/Win 75

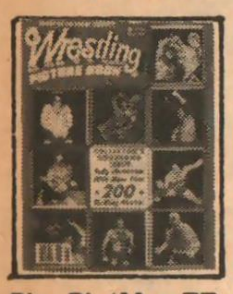
Pic. Bk/Spr 76

Pic. Bk/Sum 76

Pic. Bk/Fall 76

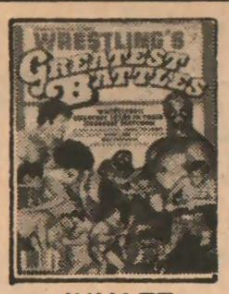

Pic. Bk/Win 76


Pic. Bk/Mar 77


Pic. Bk/May 77

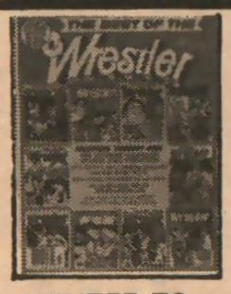
GREATEST BATTLES

APRIL 77


JULY 77

BEST OF WRESTLER

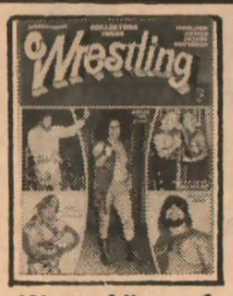
FALL 76

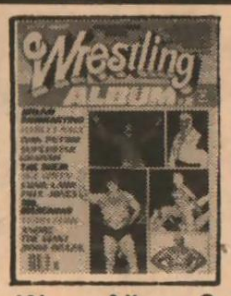

WINTER 76

SPRING 77

SUMMER 77

ALBUM


Wres. Album 1

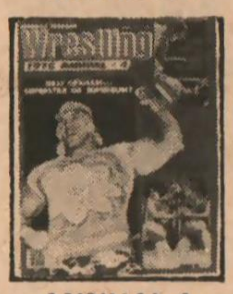

Wres. Album 2

ANNUALS

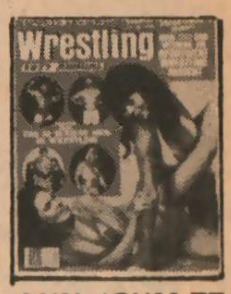
ANNUAL 1

ANNUAL 2

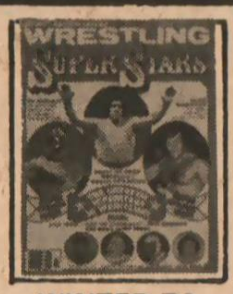
ANNUAL 3


ANNUAL 4

ANN./SPR 77


ANN./SUM 77

SUPERSTARS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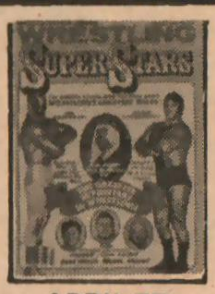
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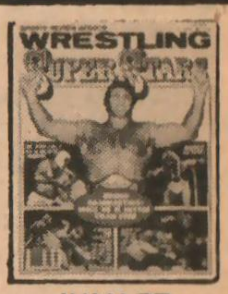
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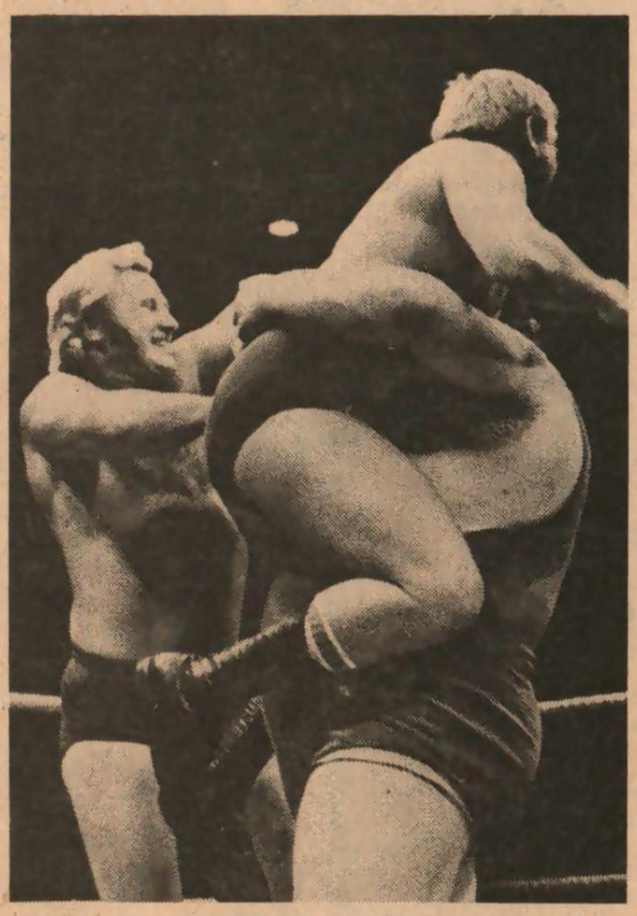
REAL REASON

(Continued from Page 40)

Above: After the match, Wahoo unhappily discusses the ruling with the referee. Below: Nick tries to free Ray from the agonizing bearhug of Taylor.



physically which takes a good long time to recover. Those two should have laid off for awhile. I guess their greed overcame common sense.

"Secondly, when Bockwinkle and Stevens climbed through the ropes against Robinson and Crusher, they were beaten men. They *knew* they weren't champions.

"It was simple for Robinson and Crusher. Wahoo and I beat those guys. The present champions just picked up the pieces.

"I'm not saying Billy and Crusher won't be great champions. They will be and they deserve to be. However, they won the belt by defeating two guys who were *already* beaten. Wahoo and I had psychologically crippled them. You can't be a champion if you know there's at least one team much better than you are!"

Nobody who saw the match doubts that Bockwinkle and Stevens were beaten by Taylor and McDaniel. Though all four were badly bloodied during the furious battle, the all-important third fall was clearly dominated by the challengers. The pace of the match had taken its toll on the champions. Ray and Nick couldn't defend themselves against the onslaught. So both jumped into the ring, making sure the referee saw them.

First, the referee warned them. They remained in the ring until they were disqualified. Wahoo and Chris, outraged, came after them. The champions scurried to their dressing room. Chris and Wahoo were too disappointed to pursue.

"We beat them," Chris concludes, "but Billy and Crusher have the belts. I'm happy for them. But I'll kill Bockwinkle and Stevens next time I get the chance."

It's a safe bet Wahoo McDaniel feels the same way. It's another safe bet Bockwinkle and Stevens will have to be dragged into the arena to face the angry pair. Wahoo and Chris have a lot of anger they want to take out on the former champions. □

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- ☐ January 1971
- ☐ March 1971
- ☐ April 1971
- ☐ May 1971
- ☐ June 1971
- ☐ August 1971
- ☐ December 1971

(THE WRESTLER con't.)
- ☐ May 1972
- ☐ June 1972
- ☐ July 1972
- ☐ November 1972

INSIDE WRESTLING
- ☐ November 1968
- ☐ March 1969
- ☐ May 1969
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- ☐ March 1971
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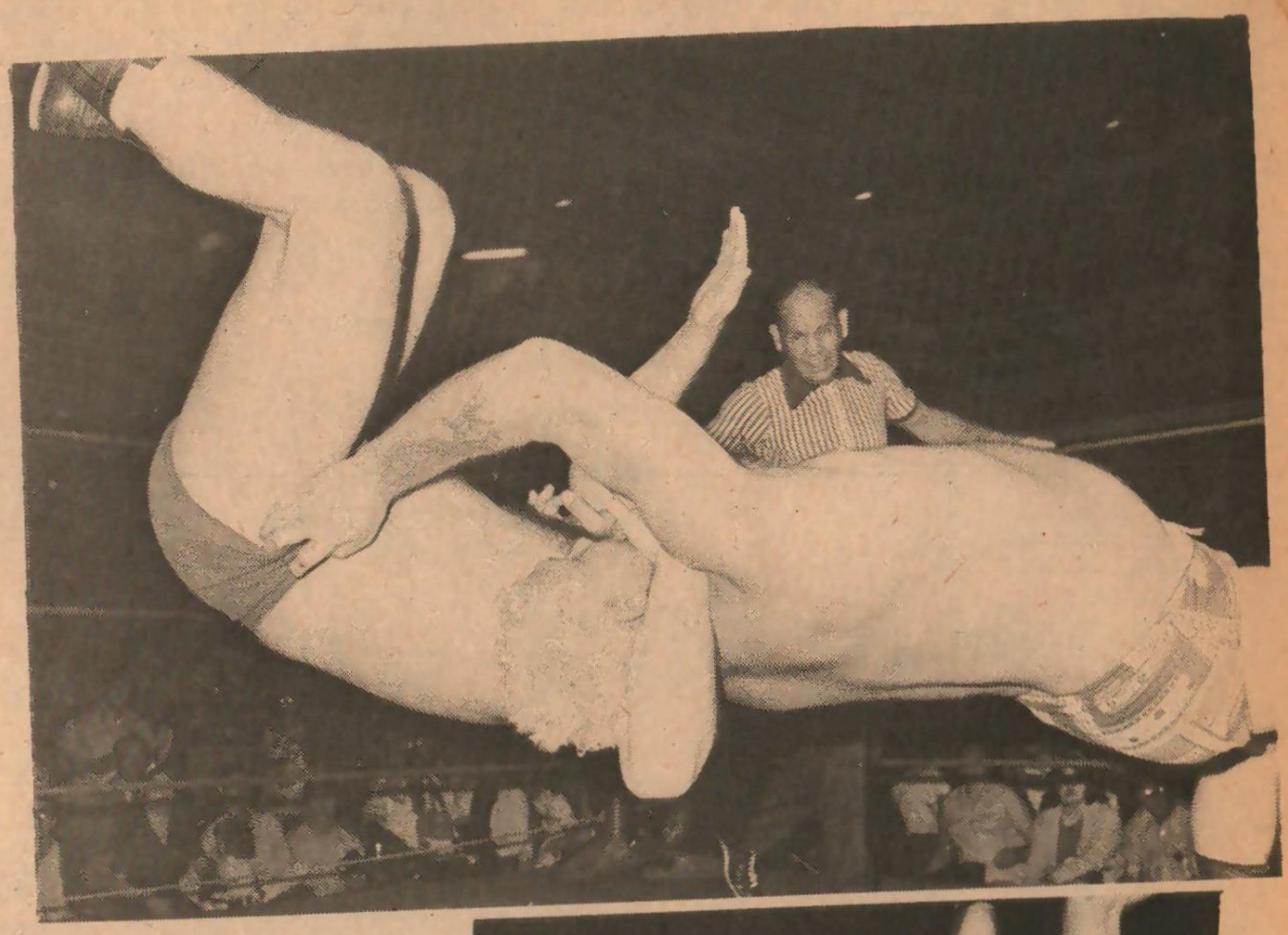
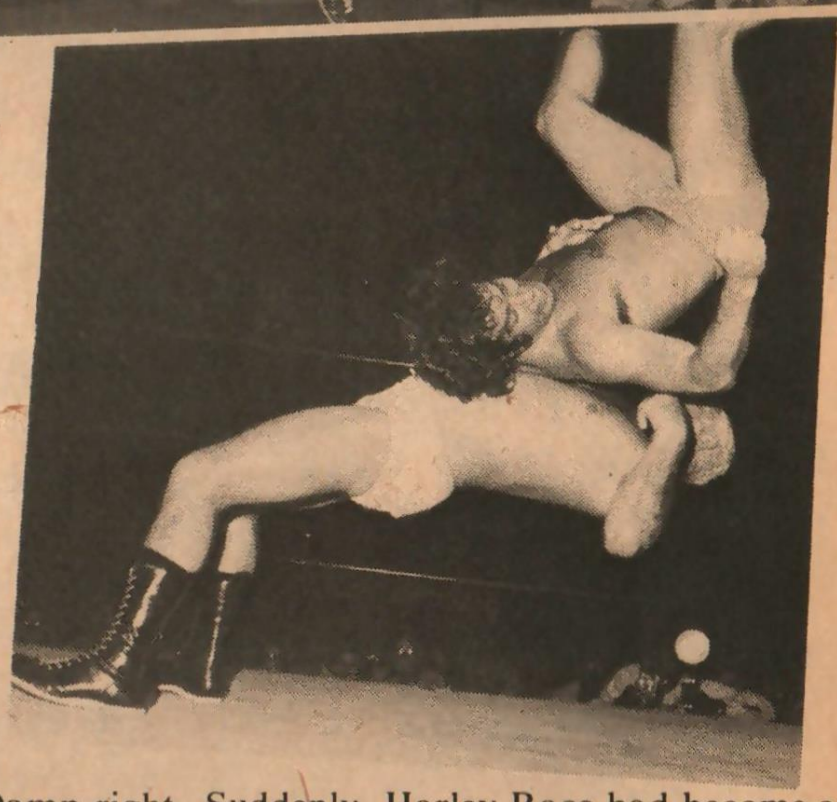
HARLEY RACE

(Continued from Page 33)





When Harley backflipped Dory Funk Jr. to win the title (above), he joined the exclusive ranks of those who have become the N.W.A. champion, earning his place in wrestling history. He held the title for only a short time, losing it to Jack Brisco (right), but his greatness should not have been questioned.

"Bitter?" he repeated. "Damn right I'm bitter! Let's face it. There were—and still are—a lot of people who plain didn't want Harley Race as champion. It really drove 'em crazy when I won the title. But did they have the guts to stand up like men and try to take the title away in the ring? No! Instead they spread rumors, lies. They went around saying I was a 'fluke' champion. Yeah. It hurt. It hurt plenty.

"You know I'm no fan of Jack Brisco's. It's no secret. But you gotta give him one thing, though. He didn't go around saying things. He won the title where it counted, even though he won it on a fast count.

"And let me tell you somethin' else. When Brisco won the title, these same people who had been runnin' me down were not only sayin' 'I told you so,' they also said I was 'washed up.' Suddenly, Harley Race had become a part of ancient history.

"Usually, when a guy loses the belt, he's still a top contender. Not me. Harley Race was dropped like a hot potato. Nobody wrote stories about me anymore. It's as if I no longer existed after I lost the title.

"So I had to fight back the only way I knew how. I had to wrestle the best, the toughest guys I could get my hands on. Guys like Dory Jr. and Johnny Valentine. The best in the business. And then suddenly, when I won the Missouri title, people started noticing me again. They started sayin' 'Hey. Maybe this guy *is* for real.'

"No. I'm not gonna name names. The guys who said those things know who they are. I'd like to think it's in the past. What I want now is another shot at Brisco. I want the title back. My

"I HAVE NO DOUBT I WILL GET THE N.W.A. BELT BACK!"

title. Only this time I'm gonna hold onto it a little longer. This time I'm gonna make 'em eat their words.

"You know, Harley Race was a big star in this sport without the N.W.A. belt. And Harley Race will continue to be a big star in this sport even if I never get that belt back.

"I just want your readers to know that on that night when I won the world title from Dory Jr., *it was no fluke! It was no accident!* I think the majority of intelligent wrestling fans have come to realize that.

"I went through a pretty rough period there for awhile. There were times—and I can talk about this now—that even I started to have second thoughts about my ability. Even I started to wonder if that 'fluke champion' crap was real.

"But winning the Missouri belt from Funk proved there wasn't anything wrong with me. It proved it to me and to the world. Now I've got myself together again, I've got my confidence back, and I'm a happy man."

"And my only word of advice to all the fans out there is to remember never to write Harley Race off again. Because I'm back on top. I'm better than ever. And when I regain the world title it's gonna make a lot of people look awfully stupid!"

"I can't wait!" □

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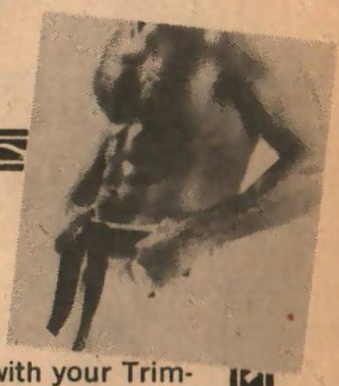

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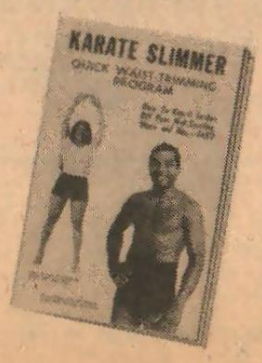

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when I planned to **retire before fifty**

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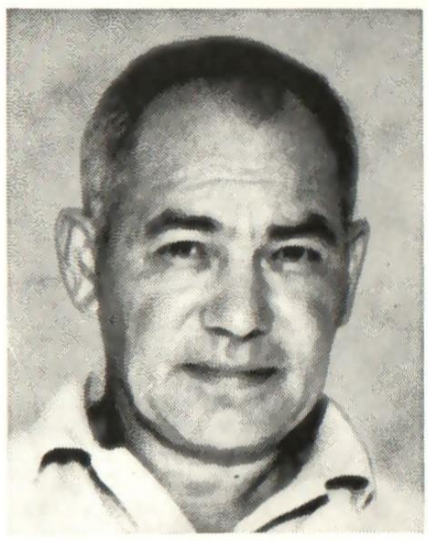
a true story by John B. Haikey



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"Not until I was forty did I make up my mind that I was going to retire before ten years had passed. I knew I couldn't do it on a salary, no matter how good. I knew I couldn't do it working for others. It was perfectly obvious to me that I had to start a business of my own. But that posed a problem. What kind of business? Most of my money was tied up. Temporarily I was broke. But, when I found the business I wanted I was able to start it for a small amount of borrowed money.

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"I managed to raise enough money with my savings to invest in a combination motel, restaurant, grocery, and service station. It didn't take long to get my eyes opened. In order to keep that business going my wife and I worked from dawn to dusk, 20 hours a day, seven days a week. Putting in all those hours didn't match my idea of independence and it gave me no time for my favorite sport—golf! Finally we both agreed that I should look for something else.

"I found it. Not right away. I investigated a lot of businesses offered as franchises. I felt that I wanted the guidance of an experienced company—wanted to have the benefit of the plans that had brought success to others, plus the benefit of running my own business under an established name that had national recognition.

"Most of the franchises offered were too costly for me. Temporarily all my capital was frozen in the motel. But I found that the Duraclean franchise offered me exactly what I had been looking for.

"I could start for a small amount. (Today, less than $1500 starts a Duraclean dealership.) I could work it as a one-man business to start. No salaries to pay. I could operate from my home. No office or shop or other overhead. For transportation, I could use the trunk of my car. (I bought the truck later, out of profits). And best of all, there was no ceiling on my earnings. I could build a business as big as my ambition and energy dictated. I could put on as many men as I needed to cover any volume. I could make a profit on every man working for me. And I could build little by little, or as fast as I wished.

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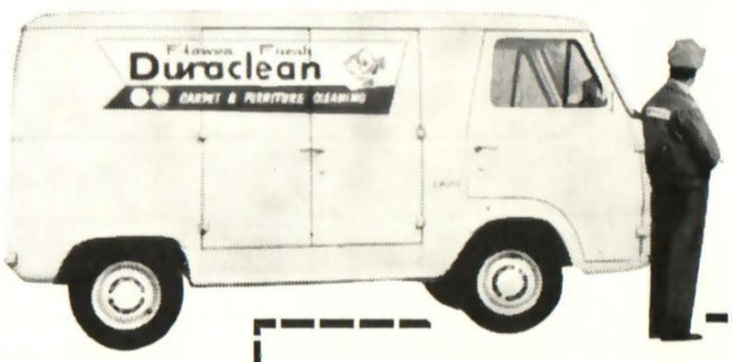

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WHAM! - NOW IT'S YOUR TURN TO DRY UP AND BLOW AWAY!
OH, MAC! YOU ARE A REAL MAN AFTER ALL!